John Adams
Library,

IN THE CUSTODY OF THE
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

SHELF No.
ADAMS
172.1
Vol. 2.

A

TREATISE

ON

MAN,

HIS

INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES

AND HIS

EDUCATION;

A Posthumous Work of

M. HELVETIUS.

Adams
172.1
Vol. 2

Honteux de m'ignorer,
Dans mon être, dans moi, je cherche à pénétrer.
VOLTAIRE, Disc. VI. de la Nat. de l'Homme.

Translated from the FRENCH, with additional Notes,

By W. HOOPER, M. D.

VOL. II.

LONDON,
Printed for B. LAW, AVE-MARIA-LANE; and
G. ROBINSON, PATER-NOSTER-ROW.
MDCCLXXVII.

5776

ADAMS 172.1
v.2

ON

MAN;

HIS

INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES

AND

HIS EDUCATION.

SECTION V.

Of the errors and contradictions of thoſe, whoſe principles differing from mine, refer the unequal degrees of underſtandings, to the unequal degrees of perfection in the organs of the ſenſes.

M. ROUSSEAU and I are of oppoſite opinions concerning this queſtion. It is not my deſign, in refuting ſome of his ideas, to criticiſe the Emilius; that work is at once worthy of its author and of the public eſteem*. But M.

* The fury with which the monks and prieſts have perſecuted M. Rouſſeau, is an unſuſpected proof of the goodneſs of his work. Common authors are free from perſecution.

Rouſſeau being a too cloſe imitator of Plato, has, perhaps, frequently ſacrificed preciſion to eloquence; and has fell into contradictions he would doubtleſs have avoided, if, a more ſcrupulous obſerver of his own ideas, he had more attentively compared them with each other.

I propoſe, in the examen of the principal aſſertions of this author, to ſhew, that almoſt all his errors are the neceſſary conſequences of the following principle, too lightly admitted. To wit,

That the inequality in underſtandings is the effect of the greater or leſſer degree of perfection of the organs of the ſenſes*, and that our virtues, as well as our talents, are equally dependent on the diverſity of our temperaments.

CHAP. I.

Contradictions of the author of Emilius concerning the inequality of underſtandings.

THE mere aſſemblage of M. Rouſſeau's ideas will prove their contrariety.

1. PROPOSITION.

He ſays, Letter 3. p. 116. vol. v. of the Eloiſa†,

* In this queſtion, regard is had only to that ſmall difference in organization, which nature has made among men endowed with all their ſenſes.

† I take moſt of my quotations from let. 3. vol. v. of the Eloiſa. It is an extract of the Emilius made by the author himſelf.

" To change the characters we muſt change " the temperaments; to deſire in like manner to " change the underſtandings, and of a fool to " make a man of talents, is to deſire to make a " fair man brown. How can we form the hearts " and underſtandings by one common model? " Do not our talents, our virtues and vices, and " conſequently our characters, depend entirely on " our organization."

2. PROPOSITION.

He ſays, p. 164, 165, 166. vol. v. of the Eloiſa,

" When children are brought up in their ori- " ginal ſimplicity, from whence do they derive " thoſe vices of which they have ſeen no example; " thoſe paſſions they have had no occaſion to feel; " thoſe prejudices that nothing can have given " them? The faults of which we accuſe nature, " are not its work, but ours. A vicious propoſal " in the mouth of a child, is a ſtrange plant " whoſe ſeed is borne by the wind."

In the firſt of thoſe quotations, M. Rouſſeau thinks that it is to our organization we owe our vices and paſſions, and conſequently our characters.

In the ſecond, on the contrary, he thinks (and I think with him) that we are born without vices,

ſelf. In this letter he has aſſembled almoſt all the principles of his great work.

becauſe we are born without ideas; but for the ſame reaſon we are alſo born without virtue. If vice be a ſtranger to human nature, virtue muſt be a ſtranger alſo. Both of them are not, and cannot be any thing other than acquiſitions (1). For which reaſon, a child is ſuppoſed not capable of ſinning till ſeven years old, as before that age it has no preciſe idea of juſtice or injuſtice, or any knowledge of its duty toward mankind.

3. PROPOISTION.

M. Rouſſeau ſays, p. 63. vol. iii. of Emilius, "That the ſentiment of juſtice is innate to the heart "of man." He repeats, p. 107. of the ſame vol. "That there is at the bottom of our ſouls an in- "nate principle of virtue and juſtice."

4. PROPOSITION.

He ſays, p. 11. vol. iii. of Emilius, "The in- "terior voice of virtue cannot be heard by the "poor (2), who only think how to ſubſiſt." He adds, p. 161. vol. iv. ibid. "The common people "have few ideas of what is fair and honeſt." And concludes, p. 112. vol. iii. "that before the "age of reaſon, man does good and evil without "knowing it.

We ſee, that if in the third of theſe propoſitions M. Rouſſeau believes the idea of virtue to be innate, in the fourth he believes it to be an acquiſition;

ſition; and he is there right. It is a perfect legiſlation only that gives all men a perfect idea of virtue, and compels them to be honeſt.

All men would have been juſt, if Heaven had engraved on their hearts, while in the cradle, the true principles of legiſlation; but that it has not done.

It was the will of Heaven therefore that men ſhould owe to reflection the excellence of their laws: that the knowledge of thoſe laws ſhould be an acquiſition, and the produce of genius improved by time and experience. In fact, I would ſay to M. Rouſſeau, if that were an innate ſentiment of juſtice and virtue, that ſentiments, like thoſe of corporeal pleaſure and pain, would be common to all men, to the poor as well as the rich, to the common people as well as the great; and man would at every time of life diſtinguiſh good from evil (3).

But M. Rouſſeau ſays, p. 109. vol. iii. of Emilius, "Without an innate principle of virtue, "ſhould we ſee the juſt man and the honeſt citizen "concur, to his own prejudice, in the public "good?" I anſwer, no one has ever concurred in the public good to his own prejudice. The heroic citizen, who riſks his life for a crown of glory, to merit the public eſteem, and to free his country from ſervitude, yields to the ſentiment that appears to him the moſt agreeable. Why ſhould he not find his happineſs in the exerciſe of

virtue, in the eſteem of the public, and the pleaſure attached to that eſteem? Why ſhould he not expoſe his life for his country, when the ſailor and the ſoldier, the one in a ſtorm, and the other in the trenches, expoſe theirs every day for a ſhilling? The generous ſpirited man, who ſeems to concur in the public good to his own prejudice, is therefore led to it by the ſentiment of a noble intereſt. Why does M. Rouſſeau deny in this place that intereſt is the ſole and univerſal motive of men's actions, and allow it in a thouſand other parts of his works? He ſays, p. 73. vol. iii. of Emilius, "A man may make what pretence he "pleaſe of preferring my intereſt to his own, and "colour the lie with what demonſtration he will, "yet I am ſtill very ſure that it is one." And, p. 137. vol. i. "When my pupil engages with me, "I would always have him find a preſent and ſen-"ſible intereſt to fulfil his engagement; and that "if he ever fail, the falſhood may draw on him "evils that he will ſee ariſe from the order of "things."

In this quotation, if M. Rouſſeau think himſelf the more ſecure of the promiſe of his pupil, as that pupil has more intereſt to keep it, why ſay, vol. i. p. 130. of Emilius, "He who keeps his "promiſe merely for his profit and intereſt, is "ſcarcely more bound than if he had never pro-"miſed." Such a man will certainly not be bound by his promiſe, but by his intereſt. Now

this

this obligation is full as good as another, and M. Rouſſeau does not doubt of it when he would have *intereſt bind his pupil to his promiſe*. Men are, and ever will be, ſo much the more faithful obſervers of their promiſe as they have more intereſt to keep it. Whoever fails in this caſe is more fool than knave.

I own that it is rare to find ſuch palpable contradictions in the principles of the ſame work. The only way of accounting for this moral phenomenon is, to allow that M. Rouſſeau, in his Emilius, has leſs regard to the truth of what he ſays, than to the manner how he ſays it. The reſult of theſe contradictions is, that the ideas of juſtice and virtue are real acquiſitions.

CHAP. II.

Of the underſtanding, and of talents.

WHAT is in man the underſtanding? The aſſemblage of his ideas. To what ſort of underſtanding do we give the name of talent? To an underſtanding concentred in one ſubject; that is to ſay, to a large aſſemblage of ideas of the ſame kind.

Now, if there be no innate ideas, (as M. Rouſſeau allows in ſeveral parts of his work,) underſtanding and talent muſt be acquiſitions in us, and both of them, as I have already ſaid, have therefore for generative principles:

1. Corporeal ſenſibility; without which we can receive no ſenſations.

2. Memory; that is, the faculty of recollecting ſenſations received.

3. An intereſt to induce us to compare our ſenſations with each other (4); that is, to obſerve with attention the reſemblances and differences, and agreements and diſagreements that divers objects have with each other.

It is this intereſt that fixes the attention, and that in men, organized in the common manner, is the productive principle of their underſtanding.

The talents, regarded by ſome as the effect of a particular diſpoſition to a particular ſort of underſtanding, are, in reality, nothing more than the produce of the attention applied to ideas of a certain ſort. I compare the maſs of human knowledge to the keys of an organ. The ſeveral talents are the ſtops, and the attention, put in action by intereſt, is the hand, that can indifferently apply itſelf to one or other of the ſtops.

In ſhort, if we acquire even the ſentiment of ſelf-love, and if we cannot love ourſelves without having previouſly felt the ſenſation of corporeal pleaſure and pain, all then in us is acquiſition.

Our underſtanding, our talents, our vices and virtues, our prejudices and characters, neceſſarily formed by the aſſemblage of our ideas and ſentiments, are not therefore the effect of our ſeveral

temperaments.

temperaments. Our paſſions themſelves are not dependent on them. I ſhall cite the people of the North as a proof of this truth. Their phlegmatic temperament is, they ſay, the particular effect of their climate and nouriſhment; yet are they as ſuſceptible of pride, envy, ambition, avarice, and ſuperſtition, as the more ſanguine* and bilious inhabitants of the South (5). When we look into hiſtory, we ſee nations change their characters on a ſudden, without any change in the nature of their climates, or in their nouriſhment.

I will alſo add, that if all characters, as M. Rouſſeau pretends†, *were good and ſound of themſelves*, that goodneſs being univerſal and conſequently independent of the diverſity of temperaments, would make againſt his opinion. Would to Heaven that goodneſs were the lot of man! It is with regret that on this point I am again of a contrary opinion to M. Rouſſeau. What pleaſure would it be to find all men good! But by perſuading them that they are ſo, I ſhould relax their ardour to become ſo. I ſhould call them good and make them bad.

Is a man honeſt? Does he ſerve his ſovereign, and merit his confidence, when he hides from him

* This fact clearly proves that the paſſions above mentioned are not the effects of the diverſity of temperaments, but, as I have ſaid, of the love of power.

† Page 109, vol. v. of Eloiſa.

the

the miſeries of his people? No: but when he informs him of it, and points out the means of relieving it. He who deceives mankind is not their friend. Who are then the friends to kings? What courtier is always true to his prince? What man is always true to himſelf? The bully ſays that every one is brave, that he may be thought ſo himſelf: and ſometimes the Shafteſburyian, who is the greateſt knave, maintains with the utmoſt vehemence the original goodneſs of man.

With regard to myſelf, I ſhall not amuſe mankind into a fatal ſecurity concerning this matter. I ſhall not repeat to them inceſſantly that they are good. If the legiſlature, leſs guarded againſt vice, ſhall neglect the eſtabliſhment of laws proper to ſuppreſs it, I ſhall not commit treaſon againſt humanity; I ſhall dare to ſpeak the truth, and to diſcuſs a queſtion that I cannot do without ſhewing relatively to my ſubject, that on this point M. Rouſſeau is not more conſiſtent with himſelf than on the former.

CHAP. III.

Of the goodneſs of man in the cradle.

I Love you, O my fellow citizens! and my chief deſire is to be uſeful to you. I doubtleſs deſire your approbation; but ſhall I owe your eſteem and applauſe to a lie? A thouſand others will

will deceive you; I ſhall not be their accomplice. Some will ſay you are good, and flatter the deſire you have to think yourſelves ſo: believe them not. Others will ſay you are wicked, and in like manner will ſay falſe. You are neither the one nor the other.

No individual is born good or bad. Men are the one or the other, according as a ſimilar or oppoſite intereſt unites or divides them (6). Philoſophers ſuppoſe men to be born in a ſtate of war. A common deſire to poſſeſs the ſame things, arm them from the cradle, ſay they, againſt each other.

The ſtate of war, without doubt, follows cloſe the inſtant of their birth. The peace between them is of ſhort duration. They are not however born enemies. Goodneſs or badneſs is an incident to them; it is the conſequence of their good or bad laws. What we call in man his goodneſs or moral ſenſe, is his benevolence to others; and that benevolence is always in him proportionate to the utility they are of to him. I prefer my countrymen to ſtrangers, and my friends to my countrymen. The proſperity of my friend is reflected on me. If he become more-rich and powerful, I participate his riches and power. Benevolence to others is therefore the effect of love for ourſelves. Now if ſelf-love, as I have proved in the fourth ſection, be in us the neceſſary effect of the faculty of ſenſation, our love for others, whatever the

Shafteſburyians

Shafteſburyians may ſay, is in like manner the effect of the ſame faculty.

What in fact is that original goodneſs or moral ſenſe, ſo much boaſted of by the Engliſh * ? What clear idea can we form of ſuch a ſenſe †, and on

* It is on a conſtant and general obſervation this proverb is founded: *the misfortune of others is but a dream.* Experience therefore does not prove that men are ſo good.

† If they admit a moral ſenſe, why not an algebraic or chymical ſenſe? Why ſhould we create a ſixth ſenſe in man? Is it to give him clearer ideas of morality? But what is morality? *The ſcience of the means invented by men to live together in the moſt happy manner poſſible.* This ſcience, if thoſe in power do not oppoſe its progreſs, will increaſe in proportion as the people acquire more knowledge. Men would have morality to be the work of God; but it makes every where a part of the legiſlation of the people: now legiſlation is the work of man. If God be eſteemed the author of morality, it is becauſe he is the author of human reaſon, and morality the offſpring of that reaſon. To indentify God and morality is idolatry; it is to deify the work of men. They have made compacts; morality is nothing more than the collection of theſe compacts. The true object of this ſcience is the happineſs of the majority. *Salus populi ſuprema lex eſto.* If the morality of mankind produces ſo often a contrary effect, it is becauſe the powerful direct all its precepts to their particular advantage; it is becauſe they conſtantly repeat, *Salus gubernantium ſuperma lex eſto.* It is, in ſhort, becauſe the morality of moſt nations is now nothing more than a collection of the means employed, and the precepts dictated by the powerful to ſecure their authority, and to be unjuſt with impunity.

But can ſuch precepts be reſpected? Yes, when they are conſecrated by edicts, by abſurd laws, and above all, by the dread of power. It is then they acquire a legal authority while that power continues.

There is then nothing more difficult than to recal morality to its true object. For which reaſon we find a wiſe legiſlation, and a pure morality in thoſe countries only where, as in England,

what fact do we found its exiſtence? On the goodneſs of men? But there are alſo, who are envious and liars, *omnis homo mendax*. Will they ſay in conſequence, that thoſe men have in them an immoral ſenſe of envy, and a lying ſenſe. Nothing is more abſurd than this theologic philoſophy of Shafteſbury; and yet the greateſt part of the Engliſh are as fond of it as the French were formerly of their muſic. It is not the ſame with other nations. No ſtranger can underſtand the one or hear the other. It is a web on the eye of the Engliſh. It muſt be taken away before they can ſee clearly.

According to their philoſophy, the man indifferent and ſeated at his eaſe, deſires the happineſs of others: but as being indifferent, he does not, and cannot deſire any thing. The ſtates of deſire and indifference are contradictory. Perhaps the ſtate of perfect indifference is even impoſſible. Experience teaches us that man is born neither good nor bad: that his happineſs is not ne-

land, the people have a part in the adminiſtration, wherethe nation is the ſovereign; and where the laws, conſtantly eſtabliſhed in favour of the people in power, are neceſſarily conformable to the intereſt of the majority.

According to this ſummary idea of the ſcience of morality, it is evidently like others, the produce of experience and meditation, and not of *a moral ſenſe*: that it may, like other ſciences, be daily improved; and that nothing authorizes man to ſuppoſe he has a ſixth ſenſe, of which it is impoſſible to form any clear idea.

ceſſarily

ceſſarily connected with the miſery of others: that on the contrary, from a good education, the idea of my own happineſs will be always more or leſs cloſely connected in my memory with that of my fellow-citizens; and that the deſire of the one will produce in me the deſire of the other: from whence it follows, that the love of his neighbour is in every individual the effect of the love of himſelf. The moſt clamorous declaimers for original goodneſs* have not moreover been always the greateſt benefactors to humanity.

When the welfare of England was in agitation, they ſay, the idle Shafteſbury, that ardent apoſtle of the beauty of morality, would not even go to the parliament-houſe to ſave it. It was not the ſenſe of the beauty of morality, but the love of glory and of their country that formed Horace, Brutus, and Scævola†. The Engliſh philoſophers will in vain tell me that the beauty of morality is a ſenſe that developes with the human fœtus, and in a certain time ‡ renders him compaſ-

* The inventors of the beauty of morality are ignorant of the contempt in which their romance muſt be held by thoſe, who in quality of magiſtrates, have opportunities of knowing mankind.

† The ſo much boaſted ſyſtem of the moral ſenſe, is nothing at bottom but the ſyſtem of innate ideas deſtroyed by Locke, and publiſhed again under a different form and title.

‡ The *moral ſenſe*, like puberty, ſay the Shafteſburyians, does not diſplay itſelf in us till toward a certain age. This ſenſe, according to them, is a ſort of moral excreſcence. Now I aſk, what is a ſenſe or excreſcence that is not corporeal? We muſt

ſionate to the misfortune of his brethren. I can form an idea of my five ſenſes, and of the organs by which they are produced; but I confeſs I have no more idea of a moral ſenſe, than of a moral caſtle and elephant.

How long will men continue to uſe words that are void of meaning, and that not conveying any clear and determinate idea (7), ought to be for ever baniſhed to the ſchools of theology *. Do they mean by this moral ſenſe the ſentiment of compaſſion felt at the ſight of an unhappy object? But to compaſſionate another man's miſeries, we muſt firſt know what he ſuffers, and for that purpoſe muſt have felt pain. A compaſſion on report ſuppoſes alſo a knowledge of the miſery. Which are the evils moreover that in general we are moſt ſenſible of? Thoſe we ſuffer with the moſt impatience, and the remembrance of which is conſequently the moſt habitually preſent to us. Compaſſion therefore is not an innate ſentiment.

muſt reckon a good deal on the faith of the reader to offer him ſo abſurd a ſuppoſition; and which beſide explains nothing that we cannot explain without it.

The advocates for the moral ſenſe will ſay, with plauſibility at leaſt, that theſe arguments of M. Helvetius are like thoſe of a blind man who denies the beauty of colours, becauſe he can form no idea about it; and that all our author's ſpecious reaſonings are nothing to the ſtrong convictions of their own minds.

* *The moral ſenſe* appears to me to be one of thoſe metaphyſical or moral beings that we ought never to cite in a book of philoſophy. It has been ſometimes introduced in the Italian comedy, where it has enfeebled the action: it is ſcarce tolerable in the prologues.

What

What do I feel at the preſence of an unhappy perſon? A ſtrong emotion. What produces it? The remembrance of pains to which men are ſubject, and to which I myſelf am expoſed (8): ſuch an idea troubles me, makes me uneaſy, and as long as the unfortunate perſon is preſent I am afflicted. When I have aſſiſted him, and ſee him no more, a calm takes place inſenſibly in my mind; for in proportion as he is diſtant from me, the remembrance of the miſeries that his preſence recalled, inſenſibly vaniſhes: when therefore I was afflicted at his preſence, it was for myſelf I was afflicted. Which in fact are the evils I commiſerate moſt? They are, as I have already ſaid, not only thoſe I have felt, but thoſe I may ſtill feel: thoſe evils being moſt preſent to my memory, ſtrike me the ſtrongeſt. My affliction for the miſeries of an unhappy perſon, are always in proportion to the fear I have of being afflicted with the ſame miſeries. I would, if it were poſſible, deſtroy in him the very root of his misfortune, and thereby free myſelf at the ſame time from the fear of ſuffering in the ſame manner*. The love of

* *Yet ſhould ſome neighbour feel a pain*
Juſt in the parts where I complain;
How many a meſſage would he ſend?
What hearty prayers, that I ſhould mend:
Enquire what regimen I kept;
What gave me eaſe, and how I ſlept;
And more lament when I was dead,
Than all the ſnivelers round my bed. SWIFT.

others

others is therefore never any thing elſe in man than an effect of the love of himſelf (9), and conſequently of his corporeal ſenſibility. In vain does M. Rouſſeau repeat inceſſantly, *that all men are good, and all the firſt movements of nature right.* The neceſſity of laws proves the contrary. What does this neceſſity imply? That the different intereſts of men render them good or bad; and that the only method to form virtuous citizens, is to unite the intereſt of the individual with that of the public.

At the ſame time, what man is leſs convinced than M. Rouſſeau of the original goodneſs of characters. He ſays, vol. i. p. 179. of Emilius, "Every man who has not known pain, is ignorant of the tenderneſs of humanity, or the ſweetneſs of commiſeration: his heart is not affected by any thing; he is not ſociable, but a monſter among his fellow-creatures." He adds, p. 200. vol. ii. "Nothing, in my opinion, is more true and beautiful than this maxim; *we lament in others thoſe evils only from which we are not exempt:* it is for this reaſon, (he adds,) that the prince is without pity for his ſubject, the rich obdurate toward the poor, and the nobleman toward the plebeian."

After theſe maxims, how maintain the original goodneſs of man, and pretend that *all characters are good?*

A proof that humanity is nothing more in man than the effect of the misfortunes he has

known either by himſelf (10) or by others is, that of all the ways to render him humane and compaſſionate, the moſt efficacious is to habituate him from his moſt tender age to put himſelf in the place of the miſerable. Some have in conſequence treated compaſſion as a weakneſs: let them call it ſo if they pleaſe; this weakneſs will always be in my eyes the firſt of virtues (11), becauſe it always contributes the moſt to the happineſs of humanity.

I have proved that compaſſion is not either a moral ſenſe, nor an innate ſentiment, but the pure effect of ſelf-love. What follows? That it is this ſame love, diverſly modified, according to the different education we receive, with the circumſtances, and the ſituations in which chance has placed us, that renders us humane or obdurate: that man is not born compaſſionate, but that all may and will become ſo when the laws, the form of government, and their education lead them to it.

O! you, to whom heaven has intruſted the legiſlative power, let your adminiſtration be gentle, your laws ſagacious, and you will have ſubjects humane, valiant, and virtuous! But if you alter either thoſe laws, or that wiſe adminiſtration, thoſe virtuous citizens will expire without poſterity, and you will be ſurrounded by wicked men only; for the laws will make them ſuch. Man, by nature indifferent to evil, will not give himſelf up to it without

without a motive: the happy man is humane; he is the couching lion.

Unhappy is the prince who confides in the original goodneſs of characters (12); M. Rouſſeau ſuppoſes its exiſtence; experience denies it: whoever conſults that, will learn that the child kills flys (13), beats his dog, and ſtrangles his ſparrow; that the child, born without humanity, has all the vices of the man.

The man in power is often unjuſt; the ſturdy child is the ſame: when he is not reſtrained by the preſence of his maſter, he appropriates by force, like the man in power, the ſweetmeat or play-thing of his companion. He does that for a coral or a doll he would do at a mature age for a title or a ſceptre. The uniformity in the manner of acting at thoſe two ages made M. de la Mothe ſay, *It is becauſe the child is already a man, that the man is ſtill a child.*

C'eſt que deja l'enfant eſt homme,
Et que l'homme eſt encore enfant.

The original goodneſs of characters cannot be maintained by any argument. I will even add, that in man, goodneſs and humanity cannot be the work of nature, but that of education only.

CHAP. IV.

The man of nature ought to be cruel.

WHAT does the proſpect of nature preſent us? A multitude of beings deſtined to devour each other. Man in particular, ſay the anatomiſts, has the tooth of a carnivorous animal; he ought therefore to be voracious, and conſequently cruel and bloody. Fleſh, moreover, is his moſt wholſome nouriſhment, and the moſt conformable to his organization: his preſervation, like that of almoſt all the ſpecies of animals, is connected with the deſtruction of others.

Men diſperſed among the vaſt foreſts are at firſt hunters. When they become more numerous, and are forced to find their nouriſhment with in a ſmaller ſpace, neceſſity makes them ſhepherds; when ſtill more multiplied, they become at laſt huſbandmen. Now in all theſe ſeveral ſituations, man is born a deſtroyer of animals, either by eating their fleſh, or by defending againſt them the fruits, grain, or pulſe, neceſſary to his ſubſiſtence.

The man of nature is his own butcher, and his own cook; his hands are always imbrued in blood; habituated to murder, he ought to be deaf to the cry of pity. If the ſtag at bay affects me; if his tears excite mine, this object ſo affecting by its

its novelty, is agreeable to the ſavage whom habit has rendered obdurate.

The moſt pleaſing melody to an inquiſitor are the groans of torture: he laughs by the ſide of the fire in which the heretic is burning. This inquiſitor, an authorized aſſaſſin of the law, preſerves, even in the boſom of cities, the ferocity of the man of nature; he is a man of blood. The nearer we return to that ſtate, the more we accuſtom ourſelves to murder, the leſs it coſts. Why is the loweſt of the butchering tribe, in default of an executioner, obliged to perform his functions? Becauſe his profeſſion renders him void of compaſſion. He whom a good education has not accuſtomed to ſee, in the misfortunes of others, to what he is himſelf expoſed, will be always obdurate, and often ſanguinary. The common people are ſo; they have not the underſtanding to be humane. It is curioſity, they ſay, that carries them to Tyburn or the Greve: yes, the firſt time; if they go again, it is cruelty*. They are moved and weep at executions; aud ſo does the man of education at a tragedy, but yet the repreſentation is agreeable to him.

He that maintains the original goodneſs of men, deſigns to deceive them. Muſt there be in morals, as well as in religion, ſo many hypocrites,

* *This is certainly the caſe with great numbers; but are there not many carried thither by a deſire to ſympathize with the unhappy victims in their laſt moments?*

and ſo few that are ſincere? Can the regard with which a reciprocal fear inſpires two perſons, nearly equal in force, be taken for a natural goodneſs in human nature, when even the poliſhed man, not reſtrained by that fear, becomes cruel and ſanguinary?

Reflect on the ſcene of a field of battle immediately after a victory, while the plain is yet ſtrewed with the dead and the dying: when avarice and rapine caſt their greedy looks on the bloody habiliments of the victims, yet panting for the public welfare: when void of pity, they approach the unhappy men, and by ſtripping them redouble their pangs. The tears, the frightful looks of agony, and the piercing cries of torture affect them not: they are blind to the tears, and deaf to the groans of the expiring wretches.

Such is man in the field of victory: is he more humane on an Eaſtern throne (14), where he commands the law? What uſe does he there make of his power? Is he buſied in promoting the felicity of his people, in relieving their wants, and eaſing the weight of their chains? The Eaſt, far from being free from the inſupportable yoke of tyranny, feels its weight each day increaſe. It is by the fear he inſpires, by the barbarity he exerciſes on his trembling ſlaves, that the tyrant meaſures his grandeur and his glory; each day is marked by the invention of ſome ſtill more cruel puniſhment: he who laments in his preſence the lot of the people, is his

enemy;

enemy; and he who in this caſe *gives advice to his maſter*, ſays the poet Saadi, *waſhes his hands in his own blood.*

Unconcerned for the misfortunes of the Romans, Arcadius, ſolely employed in feeding a chicken, was forced by the Barbarians to abandon Rome; he retired to Ravenna, and was purſued by the enemy; one army alone remained, which oppoſed the invaders; it was attacked and beaten; he was told of the defeat. Rome, they ſaid, a prey to the avarice and cruelty of the conquerors, is pillaged; the citizens are fled naked; they had not time to carry any thing with them. Arcadius interrupted the narration haſtily: Have they, ſays he, ſaved my chicken!

Such is man crowned with the diadem of deſpotiſm, or the laurels of victory (15). Freed from the fear of the laws or reſentment, his injuſtice knows no other bounds than his will. What then is become of that original goodneſs M. Rouſſeau ſometimes aſcribes, and ſometimes denies to man?

Let me not be accuſed with denying the exiſtence of good men: I know there are, who tenderly ſympathize the miſeries of their fellow-creatures: but the humanity of theſe is the effect of their education, not their nature.

Had theſe men had been born among the Iroquois, they would have adopted their barbarous cuſtoms. If M. Rouſſeau be again on this point

at contradiction with himself, it is because his principles are at contradiction with his own experience; and that he writes sometimes after the one, and sometimes after the other. Will he then forever forget that man, born without ideas or character, and indifferent to good and evil, has no gift from nature but corporeal sensibility; that in his cradle he is nothing; that his virtues and vices, his factious passions, his talents, and his prejudices, and even his self-love, all in him is acquisition.

CHAP. V.

M. Rousseau believes by turns education to be useful and unuseful.

I. PROPOSITION.

M. ROUSSEAU says, p. 109. vol. v. of Eloisa, "Education confines the natural "parts, effaces the grand qualities of the soul, to "substitute such as are trifling and apparent, but "have no reality." If this fact be admitted, nothing is more dangerous than education. Yet I would say to M. Rousseau, if such be the force of instruction over us, that it substitutes trifling qualities for the grand we receive from nature, and thus changes our characters for the worse: why cannot this same instruction substitute grand qualities for the trifling we may receive from nature,

ture, and thus change our characters for the better? The heroiſm of riſing republics proves the poſſibility of ſuch a metamorphoſis.

II. PROPOSITION.

M. Rouſſeau, p. 121. vol. v. of Eloiſa, makes Volmar ſay, "To render my children docile, my "wife has ſubſtituted in the place of the yoke of "diſcipline one more inflexible, that of neceſſity." But if we can make uſe of neceſſity in education, and if its power be irreſiſtible, we may then correct the faults of children, by changing their characters, and by changing them for the better.

In one of thoſe two propoſitions, M. Rouſſeau is not only at contradiction with himſelf, but alſo with experience.

What men in fact have given the greateſt examples of virtue? Is it thoſe ſavages of the North or the South, the Lapons and Papoux, without education; thoſe men of nature, ſo to ſay, whoſe language does not conſiſt of more than five or ſix ſounds or cries? No, doubtleſs; virtue conſiſts in ſacrificing what we call our own intereſt to that of the public. But ſuch a ſacrifice ſuppoſes men to be already aſſembled in ſocieties, and the laws of thoſe ſocieties improved to a certain degree. Where do we find heroes? Among nations more or leſs poliſhed; ſuch as the Chineſe, the Japoneſe, the Greeks, the Romans, Engliſh, Germans, French, &c.

Who

Who is, in all ſociety, the man moſt deteſtable? The man of nature; who having made no convention with his fellows, obeys nothing but his caprice, and the preſent ſentiment with which he is poſſeſſed.

III. PROPOSITION.

After having repeated, *that education effaces the great qualities of the ſoul*, could we imagine that M. Rouſſeau, p. 192. vol. iv. of Emilius, ſhould divide men into two claſſes: *one of ſuch as think, and the other ſuch as do not think?* A difference, according to him, entirely dependent on the difference of education. What a ſtriking contradiction! Is he more conſiſtent with himſelf, when after having regarded the underſtanding as the mere effect of organization, and having in conſequence declared againſt all ſort of inſtruction, he regards that of Sparta, which began at the breaſt, as of the utmoſt importance. But it will be ſaid, in oppoſing all inſtruction, M. Rouſſeau's object was merely to protect youth againſt the danger of a bad education. On this point all the world will agree with him, *that it is better a child have no education than one that is bad.* It is not therefore on ſuch a trivial truth that M. Rouſſeau can inſiſt: it is a proof of the want of preciſion in his ideas on this ſubject, that in ſeveral other parts of his works, he allows that ſome inſtruction be given to children; provided,

provided, ſays he, that it be not premature. Now on this point he again contradicts himſelf.

IV. PROPOSITION.

He ſays, p. 153. vol. v. of Eloiſa, "The progreſs of nature is the beſt; it ſhould not eſpecially "be reſtrained by a premature education." Now if there be a premature education, it is undeniably that of the nurſe; ſhe ſhould therefore give no inſtruction to her child. Let us ſee if this be the conſtant opinion of M. Rouſſeau.

V. PROPOSITION.

He ſays, vol. v. p. 135, 136. ibid. "Nurſes "ought, from the moſt tender age, to ſuppreſs in "children the fault of being clamorous: the ſame "cauſe that makes a child ſquall at three years, "makes him refractory at twelve, a brawler at "twenty, imperious at thirty, and inſupportable "all his life." M. Rouſſeau therefore here allows that nurſes ſhould ſuppreſs in children the fault of ſqualling; children in the cradle are therefore already ſuſceptible of inſtruction; now if they be, why not begin their education with the moſt early age? Why hazard the ſucceſs of it by making them have at once to encounter the faults of childhood, and the habit of thoſe faults? Why not haſten to ſtifle, while the paſſions are yet weak, the ſeeds of the greateſt vices? M. Rouſſeau has

no

no doubt in this matter of the force of education.

VI. PROPOSITION.

He ſay, vol. v. p. 158. ibid. " A mother who " is a little vigilant, has in her own hands the " paſſions of her children." She is therefore in poſſeſſion of their characters: for what in fact is a character? The produce of a lively and conſtant affection, and conſequently of a ſtrong paſſion. Now if a mother has an abſolute command over the paſſions of her children, ſhe has it over their characters alſo. He who can diſpoſe of the cauſe, is maſter of the effect.

But why does Julia, always at contradiction with herſelf, repeat inceſſantly that ſhe makes little account of the inſtruction of her children, and abandons the care of it to nature, when in fact, *there is no education*, if I may uſe the expreſſion, *more education than hers*; and in ſhort, of this kind ſhe leaves nothing, ſo to ſay, for nature to do?

It is with pleaſure that I ſeize this opportunity of praiſing M. Rouſſeau; his views are ſometimes extremely refined. The means employed by Julia in the inſtruction of her children are frequently the beſt poſſible. All mankind, for example, are apes and mimicks: vice is got by contagion. Julia knew this, and would in conſequence that every one, even to her domeſtics, ſhould concur, by their example and their converſation, to inſpire her

her children with thoſe virtues ſhe would have them poſſeſs. But is ſuch plan of inſtruction practicable in domeſtic education? I doubt it: and if by the confeſſion of Julia, one brutal or flattering valet be ſufficient to deſtroy a whole education*,

* After this confeſſion of Julia, will it be believed that M. Rouſſeau reproaches me with having allowed too much to education? But no contradiction can ſtop the author of Emilius.

"Two men, ſays he, of the ſame rank receive nearly the "ſame inſtructions, and yet what a difference do we ſee in their "underſtandings? To explain the difference, let us ſuppoſe, "he adds, p. 114. vol. v. of Eloiſa, that certain objects have "acted on the one and not on the other; that ſome trifling "circumſtances have ſtruck them differently without their per-"ceiving it: all reaſonings are but ſubtilties." But I reply to M. Rouſſeau, to aſſert that the brutal or flattering character of a domeſtic is ſufficient to ſpoil an education; that an indiſcreet burſt of laughter (p. 216. vol. i. of Emilius) can retard an education ſix months, is to allow that thoſe ſame trifling circumſtances you ſo much affect to deſpiſe, are ſometimes of the greateſt importance, and conſequently that the education of two men cannot be preciſely the ſame. Now whence comes it, that after having ſo authentically recogniſed the influence of the moſt trifling cauſes on education, M. Rouſſeau ſhould compare (p. 113, 114. vol. v. of Eloiſa) the reaſonings on this ſubject to thoſe of aſtrologers? "To explain, ſays he, how men "who appear to have been born under the ſame aſpect of the "heavens, experience ſuch different fortunes, the aſtrologers "deny that thoſe men were born at the ſame inſtant." But I reply to M. Rouſſeau, that it is not in this negation the miſtake of aſtrologers conſiſts.

To ſay that the ſtars, in an inſtant, how ſmall ſoever it may be, paſs over a ſpace greater or leſs, according to the greater or leſs velocity with which they move, is a mathematical truth.

To aſſert, that for want of a clock ſufficiently accurate, or an obſervation ſufficiently exact, two men who are ſuppoſed to be born

where find ſuch domeſtics as that plan of inſtruction requires? To conclude, is what appears impoſſible in a domeſtic, equally impoſſible in a public education? I ſhall now examine that matter.

CHAP. VI.

Of the happy uſe that might be made in public education of ſome ideas of M. Rouſſeau.

IN private education there is no choice of maſters; ſuch as excel are rare; they ought to be dear; and there are few private perſons rich enough to pay them as they deſerve. It is not ſo with a public education; if legiſlators annex a large revenue to houſes of inſtruction, pay the inſtructors liberally, give them a certain importance, and render their employ honourable*, they will render

born at the ſame inſtant, did not ſee the light at the moment the ſtars were preciſely in the ſame poſition, with regard to them both, is often a doubt ſufficiently well founded.

But to believe without any proof, that the ſtars influence the fate and characters of men, is a folly, and it is that of aſtrologers.

* What is neceſſary, ſays M. Rouſſeau, to make a child learn? That he have an intereſt in learning. What is neceſſary to induce a maſter to improve his method of teaching? That he have, in like manner, an intereſt to improve it. But to accompliſh ſo troubleſome an undertaking, he ſhould have the proſpect of a conſiderable recompence. Few fathers, however, are rich enough to realize ſuch a proſpect, and reward his ſervices generouſly: the prince alone, by honouring the office of an inſtructor, and attaching handſome appointments to it, can at once inſpire men of merit with the deſire to deſerve and to obtain it.

it

it in general deſireable. Government will then have the choiee of ſo large a number of intelligent men, that they will always find enow for the places they are to fill. It is the want of rewards that occaſions the want of talents of every kind.

But in the plan of education propoſed by M. Rouſſeau, what ought to be the firſt care of the maſters? The education of the domeſtics deſtined to attend the children. Theſe domeſtics once inſtructed, the maſters, according to their own experience, and that of their predeceſſors, may apply themſelves in improving the methods of inſtruction.

Theſe maſters, charged with inſpiring their pupils with the taſtes, the ideas, and paſſions moſt conformable to the public intereſt, will be obliged, when in preſence of their pupils, to preſerve an attention to their actions, which it is impoſſible to ſupport for a long time together: if they can bear ſuch conſtraint for four or five hours in a day, it is the utmoſt. Therefore it is only in colleges, where the maſters ſucceſſively relieve each other, that uſe can be made of certain views and certain ideas to be found in the Emilius and Eloiſa. What is poſſible in a houſe of public inſtruction, is impoſſible in the houſe of a parent.

At what age does the education of children begin? If you believe M. Rouſſeau, p. 116. vol. v. of Eloiſa, *they are till ten or twelve years without judgment*. Till that age therefore all education

is

is uſeleſs. Experience, it is true, contradicts M. Rouſſeau in this matter; it teaches us that a child diſcerns, at leaſt confuſedly, at the very moment it receives perception; that it judges before twelve years of the diſtances, magnitudes, hardneſs, and ſoftneſs of bodies; of what pleaſes or diſguſts it; of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to its taſte; and laſtly, that before twelve years it has learned a great part of its native language, and already knows how to expreſs its ideas. From whence I conclude, that the intention of nature is not, as the author of Emilius ſays, that the body ſhould be fortified before the mind is exerciſed, but that the mind ſhould be exerciſed in proportion as the body is fortified. M. Rouſſeau does not appear well aſſured of the truth of his reaſonings on this point; for he allows, p. 259. vol. i. of Emilius, "That he frequently contradicts "himſelf; but, ſays he, this contradiction is only "in the words." I have already ſhown it in the things; and the author affords me a new proof in the ſame part of his work, "If I regard, ſays "he, children as incapable of reaſoning *, it is "becauſe they are made to reaſon on what they do "not comprehend." But it is in this matter the ſame with the adult as the child: they both

* The pretended incapacity of young people for reaſoning, ſays on this ſubject St. Real, is rather a condeſcenſion for the maſter than the ſcholar. Thoſe maſters who know not how to make them reaſon, have an intereſt in ſaying they are incapable of it.

reaſon

reaſon badly on what they do not comprehend. We may even aſſert, that if the child be equally capable of learning of languages as the grown man, he is equally ſuſceptible of attention, and can equally well perceive the reſemblances and differences, the agreements and diſagreements between divers objects, and conſequently reaſon equally juſt.

What moreover are the proofs on which M. Rouſſeau founds his aſſertion, when he ſays, p. 203. vol. i. of Emilius, "that if we could bring "up a healthful and robuſt pupil to 10 or 12 "years, without his being able to diſtinguiſh his "right hand from his left, and without knowing "what a book was, the eyes of his underſtand-"ing would open at once to the leſſons of reaſon."

I cannot conceive, I confeſs, why a child ſhould ſee the better, for *the eyes of his underſtanding* not being opened till 10 or 12 years. All that I know is, that the attention of a child delivered up to diſſipation till that age is very difficult to fix; and that the man of ſcience himſelf, diverted from his ſtudies for a too long time, does not return to them without difficulty. It is with the mind as with the body: the one is not rendered attentive, nor the other ſupple, without continual exerciſe. It is habit alone that makes attention eaſy.

But we have ſeen men at a mature age triumph over obſtacles that a long inappplication has ſet to the acquiſition of talents.

A ſtrong deſire of glory can, without doubt, produce wonders. But what a concurrence, what a rare union of circumſtances are neceſſary to produce ſuch a deſire. Should we reckon on this concurrence, and expect all from a miracle? The moſt certain method is to habituate children early to the fatigue of attention. This habit is the moſt real advantage we now draw from the beſt ſtudies. But what is to be done to make children attentive? Make it their intereſt. It is for this reaſon that recourſe is ſometimes had to chaſtiſement (16.) Fear engenders attention, and if moreover the methods of inſtruction be improved, this attention is attended with little trouble.

But are theſe methods eaſy to be improved?

In an abſtract ſcience; for example, ſuch as morality, let the pupil riſe from particular ideas, to thoſe that are general; and let clear and determinate ideas be fixed to the words that compoſe the language of that ſcience; the ſtudy of it will then become facile. For what reaſon do we not, like exact obſervers of the human mind, diſpoſe our ſtudies in ſuch a manner that experience may be the only, or at leaſt the principal maſter; and that in every ſcience the pupil may conſtantly riſe from ſimple ſenſations to the moſt complex ideas? This method once adopted, the progreſs of the learner would be more rapid, his knowledge more certain, and the ſtudy being leſs painful, would become leſs diſguſtful to him, and inſtruction

ſtruction would conſequently have more influence over him.

To repeat inceſſantly that *childhood and youth are without judgment*, is the language of the old men in a comedy. Youth reflects leſs than age, becauſe it feels more, and that all objects being new to him, make a ſtronger impreſſion on him; but if the force of his ſenſations divert his reflection, vivacity engraves the more ſtrongly on his memory thoſe objects that ſome intereſt or other will one day make him compare together.

CHAP. VII.

Of the pretended ſuperiority of mature age over that of youth.

MAN knows more than youth; he has more facts in his memory; but has he more aptitude to learn, more force of attention, more capacity to reaſoning? No: it is at the commencement of youth, at the age of deſires and paſſions, that our ideas ſhoot forth, if I may ſo ſay, and flouriſh with the greateſt vigour. It is with the ſpring of life as with the ſpring of the year. The ſap then mounts vigorouſly in the trees, ſpreads itſelf through their branches, is diffuſed among the twigs, ſhades them with leaves, adorns them with bloſſoms, and ſets their fruits. It is in

the youth of man, in like manner, that thoſe ſublime thoughts are ſet, which are one day to render him renowned.

In the ſummer of life his ideas ripen: in this ſeaſon man compares them together, and by uniting them forms one great whole. He paſſes during his labour from youth to mature age, and the public, which then reaps the fruit of his labours, regards the gifts of his ſpring as a pledge of his autumn*. When a man is young, it is then that he is on the whole moſt perfect (17), that he has moſt diſcernment and ſpirit, and diffuſes moſt of it on all that ſurrounds him.

If we regard thoſe empires where the ſoul of the prince becomes that of the nation, and communicates to it life and motion; where, like the fountain of Alcinous, whoſe waters ſprang forth from the center of the palace, and diſtributed themſelves by a hundred canals through the capital; we ſee the ſpirit of the prince is, in like manner, by the canal of his miniſters, tranſmitted to his ſubjects. What follows? That in thoſe empires where all proceeds from the monarch, the period of his youth is commonly that when his nation is moſt flouriſhing. If fortune, like a coquette, ſeems to fly from grey hairs, it is becauſe the activity of the paſſions

* In early youth it is to the deſire of glory, ſometimes to the love of women, that we owe our moſt lively taſte for ſtudy; and in a more advanced age, it is only to the force of habit that we owe the continuance of that taſte.

ſeems

ſeems then to abandon the prince (18), and activity is the mother of ſucceſs.

In proportion as old age approaches, man, leſs attached to the earth, is leſs fit to govern. He feels the powers of life each day deſerting him. The principle of his activity exhales. The ſoul of the ſovereign grows torpid, and his torpidity communicates itſelf to his ſubjects, they loſe their firmneſs and energy: it was in vain they expected in the old age of Lewis XIV. the laurels that crowned his youth.

To know the power of education over children, look into the fifth volume of Eloiſa, and refer to Julia, or M. Rouſſeau himſelf. He there ſays *, "that the children of Julia, of which the eldeſt † "was ſix years old, could then read tolerably "well: that they were already docile ‡; that "they were accuſtomed to denial ‖; that Julia had "ſubdued in them the cauſe of clamour §; that "ſhe had baniſhed from their ſouls falſhood, va-"nity, anger, and envy ¶."

Let Julia, or M. Rouſſeau regard, if they pleaſe, theſe inſtructions as merely preparatory, the name is nothing to the thing. It is however certain, that at ſix years there are few whoſe education is more advanced. What a ſtill more aſtoniſhing progreſs does he aſcribe to his pupil, p.

* Page 159. † Page 148. ‡ Page 120. ‖ Page 132. § Page 135, 136. ¶ Page 123.

132, vol. ii. of Emilius. "By means of my "education, says he, what great ideas do I find "ranged in the head of Emilius! What a clear "judgment! What just reasoning! Superior man, "if he cannot elevate others to his capacity, he "lets himself down to theirs. The true principles "of what is just, the true models of what is beau-"tiful, all the relations of moral beings, all the "ideas of order are engraved on his mind."

If such be the Emilius of M. Rousseau, there is no body will contest with him the rank of a superior man. This pupil, however, p. 302. vol. ii. "had received from nature but moderate disposi-"tions to understanding."

That superiority therefore, as M. Rousseau maintains, is not in us the effect of the greater or less perfection of our organs, but of our education.

The contradictions of this celebrated writer are not to be wondered at. His observations are almost always just, and his principles almost always false and trite. From hence his errors. Little scrupulous in examining opinions generally received, the number of those he adopts impose on him: and what philosopher always regards his opinions with the severe eye of scrupulosity. The greatest part of mankind repeat them after each other. They are like travellers, who successively give the same description of countries thro' which

which they have paſſed rapidly, or even that they have never ſeen.

On the ancient theatres there were, they ſay, a great number of artificial echoes, placed at different diſtances, and but few actors on the ſtage. In like manner on the theatre of the world, the number of thoſe that think for themſelves is very ſmall, and the number of echoes very great. We are every where ſtunned with their noiſe. I do not apply this compariſon to M. Rouſſeau; but I ſhall obſerve, that as there is no genius into whoſe compoſitions there does not enter a great deal of hearſay, ſo it is one of theſe hearſays that without doubt made M. Rouſſeau believe, "that children, "before 10 or 12 years, are entirely incapable of "reaſoning and inſtruction."

CHAP. VIII.

Of the encomiums made by M. Rouſſeau on ignorance.

HE who ſhall chance to regard the diverſity of underſtandings and characters, as the effect of the diverſity of temperaments *, and

* If characters were produced by organiſation, there would be in every country a certain number of men of a remarkable character. Why do we commonly meet with them only in free countries? Becauſe, they ſay, it is in thoſe countries only that characters can diſplay themſelves. But can morality oppoſe the developement of a corporeal cauſe? Is there any moral maxim that can humaniſe a wolf?

who ſhall perſuade himſelf *that education adds but trifling qualities to the great we receive from nature*, will, in conſequence, believe education to be prejudicial (19) and will alſo ſometimes become the apologiſt of ignorance. Thus M. Rouſſeau, p. 163. vol. iii. of Eloiſa, ſays, " that it is not " from books children ought to draw their know- " ledge : knowledge, he adds, is not to be found " there." But without books would the ſciences and arts have ever attained a certain degree of perfection? Why ſhould we not learn geometry, from Euclid and Clairaut : medicine from Hippocrates and Boerhaave ; the art of war from Cæſar, Feuquiere, and Montecuculi ; the civil law from Domat ; and, to conclude, politics and morality from the hiſtorians ; ſuch as Tacitus, Hume, Polybius and Machiavel? Why does M. Rouſſeau, not content with deſpiſing letters, ſeem to inſinuate that man, virtuous by nature, owes his vices to his knowledge? " It is of little concern to me, " ſays Julia, p. 158. vol. v. ibid. whether my ſon " be learned : I am content that he be wiſe and " good." But do the ſciences render a citizen vicious? Is the ignorant man better (20) and wiſer than all others?

If the ſort of probity neceſſary to prevent a man from being hanged requires little learning, is it the ſame with a refined and delicate probity? What a knowledge of patriotic duties does not ſuch a probity ſuppoſe?

Among

Among the ſtupid I have ſeen ſome good men, though but few in number. I have ſeen many oyſters; but few that contained pearls. It has not been obſerved, that the moſt ignorant of mankind are the moſt happy, the moſt humane and virtuous (21).

In North America an inhuman war arms the ignorant ſavages perpetually againſt each other. Theſe ſavages, cruel in their combats, are ſtill more ſo in their triumphs. In what manner do they treat their priſoners? With death in the midſt of the moſt horrid torments. Has peace, with the calumet in her hand, ſuſpended the fury of this ſavage people? What outrages do they not frequently commit in their own ſettlements? How often have we ſeen murder, cruelty, and treachery, encouraged by impunity (22) there walk boldly forth?

For what reaſon, in fact, ſhould the wild man of the foreſt be more virtuous than the enlightened man of the city? Men are every where born with the ſame wants, and the ſame deſire of gratifying thoſe wants. They are the ſame in the cradle, and if they differ among themſelves, it is when they are further entered on the career of life.

The wants of a ſavage people, they will ſay, are reducible to ſuch as are merely corporeal, and are few in number. Thoſe of a poliſhed nation on the contrary are immenſe. Few men are there expoſed to the ſeverity of hunger: yet how many

deſires

deſires and appetites have they to gratify? and what diſputes, quarrels, and vices ariſe from that multiplicity of appetites! Yes; but what laws and policy have they alſo to ſuppreſs them!

Beſide, great crimes are not always the effects of the multitude of our deſires. It is not the number, but the ſtrength of the paſſions by which many crimes are produced. The more deſires and appetites I have, the leſs ardent they are. The torrents that divide themſelves into many branches are the leaſt dangerous in their courſe. A ſtrong paſſion is a ſolitary paſſion, that concenters all our deſires within one point. Such are frequently the paſſions produced in us by corporeal wants.

When two nations without arts and agriculture are ſometimes expoſed to the torment of famine, with what a principle of activity are they animated. There is no fiſhy lake, no foreſt of game, that does not become the cauſe of diſputes, quarrels, and battles between them. If the fiſh and the game begin to fail, each one defends the lake or the foreſt as his peculiar property, as the huſbandman defends the entrance to the field that is ready for the mower.

Hunger returns many times a day, and for that reaſon becomes a more active principle in a ſavage, than the variety of taſtes and deſires among a poliſhed people. Now the activity of the ſavage is always cruel, becauſe it is not reſtrained by any law. For this reaſon there are more cruelty and crimes

crimes committed in North America, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, than in all Europe. On what then can the opinion of the virtue and goodneſs of the ſavages be founded?

Does the depopulation of the northern countries, ſo often ravaged by famine, prove that the Samoiedes are happier than the Hollanders? Since the invention of fire arms, and the progreſs of the military art, (23) how wretched is the ſtate of the Eſkimau! To what does he owe his exiſtence? To the compaſſion of the European nations. If there ſhould ariſe any diſpute between them and the ſavages, the latter would be deſtroyed. Can they be a happy people whoſe exiſtence depends on ſuch a contingency?

If the Huron and the Iroquois were as ignorant as M. Rouſſeau could deſire, I ſhould not think them the more happy. It is to their learning and the wiſdom of their legiſlation that a people owe their virtue, their proſperity, their population, and their power. At what time did the Ruſſians become formidable to Europe? When the czar forced them to acquire knowledge (24). M. Rouſſeau, vol. iii. p. 30. of Emilius, "is abſolutely of opinion, that the arts and ſciences, philoſophy, "and the habits it produces, will ſoon change "Europe into a deſert (25), and in ſhort that "learning corrupts morality." But on what does he found this opinion? To maintain this paradox with ſincerity, he muſt have never conſidered the empires

empires of Turkey, Iſpahan, Delli, and Morocco, or, in ſhort, any of thoſe countries where ignorance is adored equally in the moſque and in the palace.

What do we behold on the Ottoman throne? A ſovereign whoſe vaſt empire is nothing more than an immenſe deſert: the whole of whoſe riches and ſubjects being aſſembled, ſo to ſay, in an enormous capital, preſents nothing more than a vain phantom of power, and who at this time, unable to reſiſt the attack of a ſingle Chriſtian monarch, would ſplit upon the rock of Malta, and perhaps no longer make any figure in Europe.

What does Perſia preſent? Inhabitants ſcattered through vaſt regions infeſted by robbers, and twenty tyrants who diſpute, ſword in hand, about cities in aſhes, and countries that are laid waſte.

What do we ſee in India, in that country the moſt favoured by nature? A ſlothful people, debaſed by ſlavery, and who without love of the public welfare, without any elevation of ſoul, without diſcipline, and without courage, vegetate under the fineſt climate of the earth (26); a people, in ſhort, whoſe whole power cannot ſuſtain the attack of a handful of Europeans. Such is in a great part of the Eaſt the ſtate of nations ſubject to this ſo boaſted ignorance.

Can M. Rouſſeau really believe, that the empires I have juſt mentioned are better inhabited than France, Germany, Italy, Holland, &c. Can he

he think the ignorant inhabitants of theſe countries more virtuous and happy than the free and learned nation of England? No, certainly. He cannot be ignorant of facts known to the moſt ſuperficial petit maitre, and the moſt ſilly goſſip. What then could induce M. Rouſſeau ſo boldly to plead the cauſe of ignorance?

CHAP. IX.

What motives could induce M. Rouſſeau to become the apologiſt of ignorance.

IT is for M. Rouſſeau himſelf to inform us in this matter. "There is not, he ſays, p. 30. "vol. iii. of Emilius, any philoſopher who has "acquired a knowledge of the true and the falſe, "that does not prefer the falſhood he has diſco-"vered, to the truth that has been diſcovered by "another. Where is the philoſopher, he adds, "that to promote his own reputation, would not "willingly deceive the whole human race?"

Is Mr. Rouſſeau that philoſopher? I will (27) not think it. Beſide, if he thinks an ingenious falſhood can ever immortalize the name of its inventor, he deceives himſelf *; truth alone can have a durable ſucceſs. The laurels with which

* I except, however, religious falſehoods.

error

error is sometimes crowned have but the verdure of a day.

When a base soul, a mind too weak to discover the truth, knowingly asserts a falshood, it obeys its instinct; but that a philosopher can become the apostle of an error that he does not take for the truth *, I doubt, and my reason is unanswerable; it is the desire every author has of public esteem and glory. M. Rousseau has doubtless sought it, but it was as an orator, not as a philosopher. So that of all celebrated men he is the only one who has set himself up against science. (28) Does he despise it? Is he void of pride? No: but that pride was blind at a certain time †.

Doubtless when he became the apologist of ignorance he said to himself, "Mankind in general are idle, and consequently enemies to all "study that demands attention. Mankind in "general are vain, and consequently enemies "to every superior understanding. Lastly, the "commonalty have a secret hatred for learned "men and the sciences. If I can persuade them "of their inutility, I shall flatter the vanity of "the stupid; and render myself agreeable to the

* Man does not, I know, love truth for itself. He refers all to his happiness. But if he places it in a public and durable esteem, it is evident, as that esteem is attached to the discovery of the truth, that he is naturally led to the love and search of the truth. A renown acquired by error, is a phantom of glory, that is driven away by the first rays of truth and reason.

† See Vol. I. p. 54.

"ignorant;

" ignorant; I ſhall be their maſter; they my diſ-
" ciples, and my name, conſecrated by their eulo-
" gies, will be renowned throughout the univerſe.
" The monk himſelf will declare for me (29).
" The ignorant and credulous are the dupes of the
" monks: it is the public ſtupidity that makes
" his grandeur. Beſide, what period can be
" more favourable to my project? In France all
" concurs to depreciate talents. If I make a
" good uſe of the opportunity, my works will be-
" come renowned."

But can this renown be durable? Could the author of Emilius promiſe himſelf it ſhould? He muſt know that there is a ſecret inceſſant revolution operating in the minds and characters of a people, and that ignorance will at laſt diſgrace itſelf.

Now what a puniſhment is it to this author, if he already perceive that future contempt into which his panegyrics on ignorance will fall? (30) By what means can Europe be for a long time deceived in this matter? Experience teaches the people that genius and learning are the true ſources of their power, proſperity, and virtue. That on the contrary their weakneſs and unhappineſs is conſtantly the effect of a vice in their government, and conſequently of ſome ignorance in the legiſlature. Men will therefore never think knowledge and the ſciences really detrimental.

But

But men have ſometimes ſeen, I confeſs, in the ſame century, the arts and ſciences improved, and the manners corrupted, and I know with what addreſs ignorance, for ever envious, profits by theſe facts, imputing to the ſciences a corruption of manners totally dependent on another cauſe.

CHAP. X.

Of the cauſes of the decadency of an empire.

THE introduction and improvement of the arts and ſciences in an empire do not occaſion its decadency; but the ſame cauſes that accelerate the progreſs of the ſciences, ſometimes produce the moſt fatal effects.

There are nations where, by a peculiar ſeries of circumſtances, the ſeeds of the arts and ſciences do not ſpring up till the moment the manners begin to corrupt.

A certain number of men aſſemble to form a ſociety. Theſe men found a city: their neighbours ſee it riſe up, with a jealous eye. The inhabitants of that city, forced to be at once labourers and ſoldiers, make uſe by turns of the ſpade and the ſword. What in ſuch a country is the neceſſary ſcience and virtue? The military art and valour; they alone are there reſpected. Every other ſcience and virtue is there unknown. Such

was

was the ſtate of riſing Rome, when weak and ſurrounded by warlike nations, it with difficulty ſuſtained their attacks. Its glory and power extended over the whole earth; it acquired however the one and the other but ſlowly: ages of triumphs were neceſſary to ſubject their neighbours. Now when the ſurrounding nations were ſubdued, there aroſe, from the form of their government, civil wars, which were ſucceeded by thoſe with foreigners; ſo that it cannot be imagined, while the citizens were engaged in the different employments of magiſtrates and ſoldiers, and inceſſantly agitated with ſtrong hopes and fears, they could enjoy the leiſure and tranquility neceſſary to the ſtudy of the ſciences.

In every country where theſe events ſucceed each other in a regular ſeries, the only period favourable to letters is, unfortunately, that when the civil wars, the troubles and factions being extinguiſhed, liberty is expiring, as in the time of Auguſtus, under the ſtrokes of deſpotiſm*. Now this period precedes, but a ſhort time, the decadency of an empire. The arts and ſciences however then flouriſh; and that for two reaſons.

The firſt is the force of men's paſſions. In the firſt moments of ſlavery, their minds, ſtill agitated by the remembrance of their loſt liberty, are

* It was ſo in France, when cardinal Richelieu diſarmed the people and the nobles, and brought them into ſubjection. It was then that the arts and ſciences there flouriſhed.

like the ſea after a tempeſt. The citizen ſtill burns with a deſire to render himſelf illuſtrious; but his ſituation is altered. He cannot have his buſt placed by that of Timoleon, Pelopidas, or Brutus. He cannot deliver his name down to poſterity as the deſtroyer of tyrants, and the avenger of liberty. His ſtatue may however be placed by thoſe of Homer, Epicurus, or Archimedes. This he knows, and therefore if there be but one ſort of glory to which he can aſpire, if it be with the laurels of the Muſes alone that he can be crowned, it is in the career of the arts and ſciences he prepares to ſeek them, and it is then that ariſe illuſtrious men of every literary profeſſion.

The ſecond of theſe cauſes is the intereſt ſovereigns then have to encourage the progreſs of the ſciences. At the moment that deſpotiſm is eſtabliſhed what does the monarch deſire? To inſpire his ſubjects with a love of the arts and ſciences. What does he fear? That they ſhould reflect on their fetters, bluſh at their ſervitude, and again turn their looks toward liberty. He would therefore by employing their minds make them forget their baſe condition. He conſequently preſents them with new objects of glory. As an hypocritical fautor of the arts and ſciences, he ſhows the more regard to the man of genius the more he feels the want of his eulogies.

The manners of a nation do not change the moment deſpotiſm is eſtabliſhed. The ſpirit of the

the people is free ſome time after their hands are tied. During theſe firſt moments illuſtrious men ſtill preſerve ſome conſideration. The tyrant therefore loads them with favours, that they may load him with praiſes, and men of great talents are too often ſeduced to become the panegyriſts of uſurpation and tyranny.

What motives can induce them to it? Sometimes meanneſs, and frequently gratitude*. It muſt be confeſſed, that every great revolution in an empire ſuppoſes great talents in him by whom it is produced, or at leaſt ſome brilliant vice, that aſtoniſhment and gratitude metamorphoſe into virtue (31).

Such is, at the time of the eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm, the productive cauſe of great accompliſhments in the arts and ſciences. The firſt moments paſt, if the ſame country become barren in men of talents (32), it is becauſe the tyrant being then well eſtabliſhed on his throne is no longer in want of their aſſiſtance. So that the reign of the arts and ſciences in a ſtate ſeldom extends above a century or two. The aloe is an emblem of the production of the ſciences in every ſtate: a hundred years are neceſſary to ſtrengthen its root and make

* Men of letters are to be reproached with having praiſed in Cardinal Richelieu, the worſt of citizens, and the promoter of tyranny: the man who ſowed the ſeeds of the preſent evils of the French nation; the man, in ſhort, who ought to be held in equal horror by the prince and the people.

it put forth its branches, it then ſhoots up, flowers, and dies.

If in each empire the ſciences juſt ſhoot up and then wither, it is becauſe the motives proper to produce men of genius, do not commonly exert themſelves there more than once. It is at the higheſt period of grandeur, that a nation commonly produces the fruits of the arts and ſciences. While three or four generations of illuſtrious men paſs away, the people change their manners, and ſink into ſervitude; their minds have loſt their energy; there is no ſtrong paſſion remains to put them in action. The tyrant no longer excites the people to the purſuit of any kind of glory. It is not talents, but baſeneſs, he now honours: and genius, if it ſtill remain, lives and dies unknown to its own country: it is like the orange-tree, that flouriſhes, perfumes the air, and dies in a deſert.

Deſpotiſm, while it is gaining ground, ſuffers men to ſay what they will, while they ſuffer it to do what it will: but once eſtabliſhed, it forbids all talking, writing, or thinking. The minds of men then ſink into an apathy: all the inhabitants become ſlaves, curſe the breaſt that gave them milk, and under ſuch a government, every new birth in an increaſe of miſery.

Genius, there chained, drags its irons heavily along; it does not fly, it creeps. The ſciences are neglected; ignorance is honoured (33), and every man of diſcernment declared an enemy

to

to the ſtate. In the kingdom of the blind, who is the moſt odious? He that can ſee clearly. If the blind ſeize him, his deſtruction is certain. Now, in the empire of ignorance, the ſame fate attends the enlightened inhabitant. The preſs is there the more reſtrained, as the views of the miniſter are more confined. Under the reign of a Frederick, or an Antoninus, we may ſay what we will, think and write what we will: under other reigns we muſt be ſilent.

The underſtanding of the prince is always manifeſted by the eſteem and conſideration he pays to talents *. The favour he ſhows them, far from injuring, benefits the ſtate.

The arts and ſciences are the glory of a nation, and increaſe its proſperity. It is, therefore, to deſpotiſm alone, which is intereſted at firſt in protecting them, and not to the ſciences themſelves, we ſhould attribute the decadence of an empire. When the ſovereign of a mighty nation has put on the crown of arbitrary power, the people become daily more enfeebled.

The pomp of an Eaſtern empire, can without doubt impoſe on the vulgar, who may eſtimate the force of the nation, by the magnificence of its

* There are three things, ſaid Mathias, king of Hungary, that a prince ought to propoſe to himſelf:
The firſt is, to be juſt.
The ſecond, to conquer his enemies.
The third, to encourage letters, and honour illuſtrious men.

palaces. The wiſe man judges differently; it is by that very magnificence, he eſtimates its weakneſs. He ſees nothing in that impoſing pomp, in the midſt of which the tyrant ſits enthroned, than a ſumptuous and mournful decoration of the dead: than the apparatus of a faſtuous funeral, in the center of which is a cold and lifeleſs body, a lump of unanimated earth: in ſhort, a phantom of power, ready to diſappear before the enemy by whom it is deſpiſed. A great nation, where deſpotic power is at laſt eſtabliſhed, reſembles an oak that has been crowned by ages. Its majeſtic trunk, and the largeneſs of its branches, ſtill declare its priſtine force, and grandeur; it ſeems ſtill to be the monarch of the woods, but its true ſtate is that of decadency; its branches deſpoiled of their leaves, and deſtitute of the ſpirit of life, are half-withered, and ſome of them continually broken off by the wind. Such is the ſtate of a nation ſubdued by arbitrary power.

CHAP. XI.

That the cultivation of the arts and ſciences, in a deſpotic empire, retards its ruin.

IT is at the time that deſpotiſm, being completely eſtabliſhed, has reduced the people, as I have ſaid, to ſlavery: it is then, that by ſtifling in them all love of glory, and by diffuſing every where the darkneſs of ignorance, the empire precipitates into ruin (34). However, if, as M. Saurin obſerves, the ſtudy of the ſciences, and the urbanity of manners they inſpire, for ſome time abate the violence of arbitrary power, the ſciences then, far from promoting, retard the decadency of the ſtate.

The bulwark of the ſciences, it is true, cannot for a long time hold out againſt a power to which all muſt yield; that overturns the beſt eſtabliſhed thrones, and the moſt powerful empires: the corruption of manners, however, cannot at leaſt be imputed to the ſciences; they do not engender public calamities, proportional in each ſtate, to the increaſe of arbitrary power. How, in fact, can the arts and ſciences corrupt morals (35), and enervate courage? What is ſcience? A col-

lection of obſervations; if it be in mechanics, on the manner of employing moving powers; if it be geometry, on the relation of magnitudes to each other; if it be ſurgery, on the art of curing wounds; if it be legiſlation, on the means proper to render men virtuous and happy. Now, why ſhould theſe different collections of obſervations enervate courage? It was the ſcience of diſcipline, that brought the univerſe in ſubjection to the Romans. It was, therefore, in quality of men of ſcience, that they ſubdued all nations. So that, when to gain the affection of the ſoldiery, the tyrants were obliged to relax the ſeverity of military diſcipline; when, in ſhort, that ſcience was almoſt entirely loſt among them, it was then, that being vanquiſhed in their turn, the conquerors of the world ſubmitted, in conſequence of their ignorance, to bear the yoke of the northern nations.

They forged, at Sparta, well tempered helmets, cuiraſſes and ſwords. This art implies an infinity of others *, and yet the Spartans were not

* The arts of luxury, they ſay, enervate courageous men. But who is it oppoſes the entrance of luxury into a ſtate? Is it ignorance? No: it is poverty, or the nearly equal diſtribution of the national wealth. What citizen of Sparta could have purchaſed an enamelled ſnuff box? The whole public treaſure would not have paid for it. No jeweller, therefore, ſet up his trade at Lacedæmon; he would have died of hunger. It is not the fabricator of luxury, that comes to corrupt the manners of a people, but the corruption of a people that invites

leſs valiant. Cæſar, Caſſius, and Brutus, were learned, eloquent, and brave. The body and the mind were both exerciſed at the ſame time, in Greece. Luxury is the daughter of riches, and not of the ſciences. When Homer verſified the Iliad, his cotemporaries were the engravers of the buckler of Achilles. The arts had, therefore, then attained in Greece, a certain degree of perfection, and yet they ſtill exerciſed themſelves in the combats of the ceſtus, and wreſtling.

It is not the ſciences that in France render the greateſt part of the officers incapable of the fatigues of war, but the effeminacy of their education. If a commiſſion was to be denied to every one, who could not march certain diſtances, lift certain weights, and undergo certain fatigues, the deſire of obtaining military employments would detach the French from their effeminacy, their manners, and their education would be changed, they would become men. It is ignorance, pro-

invites the fabricator of luxury: in every ſort of commerce, it is the demand that precedes the offer.

Beſide, if luxury be, as I have ſaid, the effect of the too unequal diſtribution of the national wealth, it is evident, that the ſciences, having no ſhare in this unequal partition, cannot be regarded as the cauſe of luxury. Learned men have little wealth. It is with the men of buſineſs, and not with them we ſee the ſplendor of magnificence. If the arts of luxury have ſometimes flouriſhed in a nation at the ſame period with letters, it is, becauſe the epoch when the ſciences have been cultivated, has ſometimes coincided with that, when the wealth of the nation was accumulated in a few hands.

duces

duces the imperfection of the laws, and their imperfection, the vices of the people. Knowledge cauſes the contrary effect. They have, therefore, never reckoned among the corrupters of morals, Lycurgus, that ſage, who travelled through all countries, to find, in the converſation of philoſophers, that knowledge which a juſt reformation of the laws of his country required.

But, they will ſay, it was even from the acquiſition of thoſe informations, that he drew his contempt for them. Yet, who will ever believe that a legiſlator, who gave himſelf ſo much pains, to collect the works of Homer, and who erected a ſtatue to Laughter, in the public place, really deſpiſed the ſciences? The Spartans, as well as the Athenians, were the moſt learned and illuſtrious people of Greece. What a figure did the ignorant Thebans make, till the time Epaminondas drew them from their ſtupidity.

I have ſhown, in this ſection, the errors and contradictions of thoſe, whoſe principles differ from mine.

I have proved, that every panegyriſt of ignorance, is, at leaſt unknown to himſelf, an enemy to the public good.

That it is in the heart of man, the ſcience of morality ſhould be ſtudied.

That every ignorant people, though rich and civilized, are conſtantly a people without morals.

It is now proper to enlarge on the evils into which ignorance plunges a nation: the importance of a good education will then more fully appear; I ſhall excite a greater deſire to improve it, and I ſhall, by anticipation, intereſt my fellow-citizens in the ideas I ought to propoſe to them, on this ſubject.

NOTES.

NOTES.

1. (p. 4.) M. ROUSSEAU, p. 4. vol. ii. of Emilius, after having ſaid a few words on the origin of the paſſions, adds, "On this principle, it is eaſy to ſee "how we may direct all the paſſions of children and men, either "to good or evil. But if it be poſſible to direct the paſſions of "children to good or evil, it is then poſſible to change their "characters."

2. (ibid.) "The interior voice of virtue, ſays M. Rouſ-"ſeau, cannot make itſelf heard by the poor." Among the poor, this author apparently ranks unbelievers, when he adds, p. 207. vol. iii. of Emilius, "An unbeliever would have all "the world miſerable, to ſpare him the leaſt pain, or "procure him the leaſt pleaſure." M. Rouſſeau is an unbeliever, yet I do not accuſe him of forming ſuch a wiſh. M. Voltaire is no bigot, yet it was he who took in hand the defence of the innocent family of Calas; it was he who opened his purſe, and ſacrificed his time, always ſo precious to him, in ſolicitations, and who alone protected the oppreſſed widow and orphans, when they were abandoned by the clergy and the magiſtrates. Does M. Rouſſeau mean any thing more than that the infidel loves himſelf better than other people? Now this affection is common to the faithful, as well as the unbeliever. There is no ſaint that would damn himſelf for his neighbour. When St. Paul wiſhed to be anathematized for his brethren, did he not exaggerate the dignity of that ſentiment, and muſt he not have reſided a fortnight in the infernal regions, before he could be ſure he was ſincere?

3. (p. 5) "As long as a man's ſenſibility (Emilius, p. "4. vol. ii.) is confined to himſelf, there is no morality in his "actions. It is only when he begins to extend his ſenſibility "to others, that he firſt conceives thoſe ſentiments, and after-"wards, thoſe notions of good and evil, that make him a real "man." This text proves the ingenuity with which M. Rouſſeau refutes himſelf.

4. (p. 8.)

4. (p. 8.) To judge, says M. Rousseau, is not to feel. The proof of his opinion, is, "that there is in us a faculty or "power, that makes us compare objects. Now, says he, this "power cannot be the effect of corporeal sensibility." If M. Rousseau had examined this matter more profoundly, he would have seen that this power was nothing more than the interest we have in comparing objects with each other, and that this interest takes its source from self-love, the immediate effect of corporeal sensibility.

5. (p. 9.) The imagination of the people of the North is not less vigorous than those of the South. Compare the poems of Ossian with those of Homer. In reading those of Milton, Fingal, and the Erse poets, &c. we see no less force in the pictures of the northern poets, than in those of the south. So the sublime translator of the poems of Ossian *, after having proved in an excellent dissertation, that the great and masculine beauties of poetry belong to all people, observes, that compositions of this kind suppose a nation to be polished only to a certain degree. It is not, says he, the climate, but the manners of the age, that give a strong and sublime character to poetry. That of Ossian is a proof.

6. (p. 11.) If man be sometimes wicked, it is when he has an interest to be so; when the laws, that by a fear of punishment, or a hope of reward, should have directed him to virtue, lead him on the contrary to vice. Such is man in a despotic country, that is, in a land of flattery and baseness, bigotry, sloth, hypocrisy, falshood, treason, &c.

7. (p. 15.) It is not the sentiment of the beauty of morality that makes a workman labour, but the promise of a shilling to drink. Suppose a man be infirm, and depend on the assiduity of his domestics for the prolongation of his life, what must he do to secure a continuance of their care? Preach the beauty of morality? No: but tell them, that having made his will, he will reward their zeal while he lives, by giving them every year a handsome and increasing gratuity. If he keep his word, he will be as well attended, as he would have been badly, had he only reminded them of the beauty of morality.

There are no subjects on which we might not give similar instructions, which, drawn from the principle of personal interest,

* *Concerning the authenticity of these poems, see Dr. Johnson's late Journey into Scotland.*

would

would be far more efficacious, than thoſe extracted from the metaphyſical theology, or from the alambic metaphyſics of the Shafteſburyans.

8. (p. 16.) We cruſh without pity a fly, a ſpider, or other inſect, and yet cannot ſee an ox killed without pain. Why? Becauſe, in a large animal, the effuſion of blood, and the convulſions of his ſufferings bring to our minds a ſenſation of pain, that we do not feel on killing an inſect.

9. (p. 17.) When two nations have an intereſt to unite, they make a treaty of reciprocal friendſhip and humanity. When one of theſe nations no longer finds its account in the treaty, that nation breaks it: ſuch is man. Intereſt determines his love or hatred. Humanity is not eſſential to his nature. What indeed do we underſtand by the word eſſential? That, without which a thing cannot exiſt. Now, in this ſenſe corporeal ſenſibility is the only eſſential quality in men.

10. (p. 18.) We tremble at the ſight of the aſſaſſin on the wheel. Why? Becauſe his puniſhment recalls to our minds the pain and death to which nature has aſſigned us. But why are executioners and ſurgeons obdurate? Becauſe, habituated to the torture of a malefactor, or a patient, without feeling any pain themſelves, they become inſenſible to his cries. When we do not perceive in the ſufferings of others, ſuch as we are liable ourſelves, we become obdurate.

11. (ibid.) The deſire of being commiſerated in our misfortunes, and aided in our enterprizes; the deſire of fortune, converſation, pleaſure, &c. produces in us all the ſentiment of friendſhip. It is not, therefore, always founded on virtue; conſequently, the bad as well as the good, are ſuſceptible of friendſhip, but not of humanity. The good alone feel the ſentiments of a refined compaſſion and ſenſibility, which uniting man to man, renders him the friend of all his fellow-citizens. This ſentiment is felt by the virtuous alone.

12. (p. 19.) How many cruel edicts contradict the pretended natural goodneſs of man!

13. (ibid.) We ſee children encloſe chaffers and horn-beetles in hot wax, then dreſs them up like ſoldiers, and thus prolong their miſery for two or three months. It is in vain to ſay, that theſe children do not reflect on the pains thoſe inſects feel. If the ſentiment of compaſſion was as natural to them as that of fear, they would be ſenſible of the ſufferings of an inſect

in

in the same manner as fear makes them sensible of danger from a ferocious animal.

14. (p. 22.) The despotism of China, is, they say, very moderate, of which the abundance of their harvests is a proof. In China, as well as every where else, we know, that to make the earth fertile, it is not enough to compose good books of agriculture, but that there be no law which opposes cultivation. Therefore, the taxes in China, says M. Poivre, do not amount, on indifferent lands, to more than one thirtieth of the produce. The Chinese, therefore, enjoy their property almost entire. Their government, consequently, in this respect is good. But is it so with regard to the property of their persons? The habitual and enormous distribution they make of the strokes of the bamboo, proves the contrary. It is their arbitrary punishments, that doubtless debases their souls, and makes, of almost all the Chinese, a knavish merchant, a cowardly soldier, and a citizen without honour.

15. (p. 23.) M. Montesquieu compares the despotism of the East to a tree the savage cuts down that he may gather its fruit. A simple fact related in the journal, intitled 'The Political State of England, will give, perhaps, a still more horrible idea of despotism.

The English, says the journalist, were besieged in Fort William, by the troops of the Suba, or Vice-Roy of Bengal, and made prisoners. They were in number 146, shut up in the black dungeon of Calcutta, which was only 18 feet square. These wretches, in one of the hottest climates of the world, and in the hottest season of that climate, received no air but by a window that was partly blocked up by the largeness of the bars. They were scarce entered, when they were bathed in sweat, and tortured by thirst. Panting for breath, they sent forth lamentable cries, and begged to be put in a larger prison, but in vain. They endeavoured to put the air in motion by their hats, but the resource was ineffectual. Their senses left them, the greatest part fell to the earth, and died. What remained, drank the sweat of their companions; again cried for air, and to be put into two dungeons. For this purpose they addressed themselves to a jemmandaar, one of the guards of the prison; whose heart was open to compassion and avarice. He consented for a large sum to inform the Suba of their situation. At his return, those who were yet alive, cried out, from amidst the

the dead bodies, for freſh air, and to be releaſed from the dungeon. "Wretches, ſaid the guard, you muſt all die, for the "Suba ſleeps, and what ſlave dare wake him?" Such is deſpotiſm.

16. (p. 34.) M. Rouſſeau would not have children chaſtiſed. But he owns, that to make them attentive, they muſt have an intereſt to be ſo. Now, before they have attained the age of emulation, there are but two methods of exciting that intereſt in them. One is the hope of obtaining a play-thing (amuſement and gluttony are the only paſſions of infancy); the other is the fear of puniſhment. When the firſt method is found ſufficient, it deſerves the preference. When it is not, recourſe muſt be had to chaſtiſement. Fear is always employed efficaciouſly. A child has even more fear of pain, than he has love for a toy. When chaſtiſement is ſevere and properly inflicted, there is ſeldom occaſion for its being repeated. But it is clouding the dawn of life with images of trouble. No: that trouble is ſhort as the puniſhment. The moment after, the child jumps and plays with his companions, and if he remember the rod, it is in thoſe calm moments that are conſecrated to ſtudy, when the remembrance ſtrengthens his application.

Let the methods of teaching, moreover, ſtill too imperfect, be improved, and ſimplified; learning will become more eaſy, and the pupil leſs expoſed to chaſtiſement. A child would learn Italian, or German, with the ſame facility as his native tongue, if by being continually ſurrounded by Italians or Germans, he could not aſk for what he would have, but in thoſe languages.

17. (p. 36) With age, we gain knowlege and experience, but we looſe activity and firmneſs. Now, in the adminiſtration of affairs, civil and military, which of theſe qualities are moſt neceſſary? The latter. Men are always raiſed too late, ſays Machiavel, to important places. Almoſt all the great actions of the preſent and paſt ages, have been performed before the age of 30 years. Of which Hannibal, Alexander, &c. are proofs. The man who renders himſelf illuſtrious, ſays Philip de Commines, is always ſo early. It is not at the period, when enfeebled by age, inſenſible to the charms of praiſe, and indifferent to conſideration, which is the companion of glory, that men make the efforts neceſſary to attain it.

18. (p. 37.)

18. (p. 37.) In all the capital romances, it is conſtantly before their marriage that the heroes combat with monſters, giants, and enchanters. A clear and ſecret ſenſation tells the writer, that the deſire of his hero being once gratified, he has no longer in him the principle of action: and in conſequence theſe authors inform us, that after their marriage, the prince and princeſs lived happy, but in peace.

19. (p. 40) Inſtruction, always uſeful, makes us what we are. Learned writers are our inſtructors; our contempt for books is not, therefore, ſincere. Without books we ſhould ſtill be what the ſavage is.

Why have not the women of the ſeraglio the underſtanding of the women of Paris? Becauſe it is with ideas as with languages. We ſpeak that of thoſe who ſurround us. An Eaſtern ſlave has no idea of the boldneſs of the ancient Romans. He has not read Livy; has no conceptions of liberty, nor of a republican government. All in us is education and acquiſition.

20. (ibid.) The knowledge and miſtruſt of mankind are, they ſay, inſeparable. Man then is not ſo good as Julia pretends.

21. (p. 41.) The leſs knowledge we have, the more ſelf-intereſted we become. I hear a petite maitreſſe ſend forth a horrible cry: what is the matter? Is it for the bad choice of a general, or for the regiſtering an edict oppreſſive to the people? no: it is for the death of her cat, or her bird. The more ignorant we are, the leſs we perceive the relation between the national intereſt and our own.

22. (ibid.) Among certain ſavages drunkenneſs attracts reſpect. Whoever ſays he is drunk, is declared a prophet, and, like thoſe of the Jews, may commit murder with impunity.

23. (p. 43.) When a people are happy, what muſt they do to continue ſo? Take care the neighbouring nations do not bring them into ſubjection. For which purpoſe they ſhould exerciſe themſelves in arms, be well governed, have able generals, and admirals; wiſe adminiſtrators of the finances: in a word, an excellent legiſlation. It is not therefore always with ſincerity, that men become the apologiſts of igno-

rance. M. Rouſſeau well knows, that it is to the imbecility of the Sultans, almoſt all the evils of deſpotiſm are to be referred.

24. (p. 43.) Some officers in France adopt the opinion of M. Rouſſeau; they would have the ſoldiers automata. Turenne and Conde, however, never complained that theirs had too much underſtanding. The Greek and Roman ſoldiers, who on their return from the campaign, became citizens, were neceſſarily better inſtructed, more intelligent, than the ſoldiers of our days, and yet the Greek and Roman armies were at leaſt as good as our's. Does not the pains of the preſent generals to ſtifle all knowledge in the ſubalterns, declare a fear of the too diſcerning cenſures of their operations? Scipio and Cæſar had leſs diffidence.

25. (ibid.) Of all parts of Aſia, China is the moſt learned, as well as the beſt cultivated, and moſt populous. Some men of letters contend that Europe, when ignorant and barbarous, was more populous than at preſent. My anſwer to their numerous citations, is, that ten acres of wheat will nouriſh more men than a hundred acres of heath, paſturage, &c. that Europe was formerly covered with vaſt foreſts, and that the Germans lived on the produce of their cattle. This Cæſar and Tacitus affirm, and their teſtimony decides the queſtion. A nation of paſtors cannot be numerous. Civilized Europe is, therefore, neceſſarily more populous, than it was when barbarous and ſavage. It is a folly to have recourſe to hiſtorians concerning this matter, who are often untrue or ill-informed, when we have before us evident proofs of their falſhood. A country cannot ſupport a great number of people without agriculture, unleſs it be by a miracle; and miracles are much more rare than falſhoods.

26. (p. 44.) The Indians have no ſtrength of character. They have no ſpirit, but that of commerce. It is true, that in this reſpect nature has done all for them; has enriched their ſoil with thoſe precious commodities that Europe ſeeks to purchaſe. The Indians are conſequently rich and idle. They love money, but have not the courage to defend it. Their ignorance of the military art, and of the ſcience of

of government, will keep them a long time mean and deſpicable.

27. (p. 45.) There is no propoſition, moral or political, that M. Rouſſeau does not adopt and reject by turns. So many contradictions have made his ſincerity ſometimes ſuſpected. He aſſures us, for example, vol. iii. p. 132 of Emilius, "that it is to Chriſtianity, modern governments owe their "ſolid authority, and their leſs frequent revolutions; and that "Chriſtianity has rendered princes leſs ſanguinary, he ſays is "a truth, proved by facts." In his Social Contract, chap. viii. he ſays, "that at leaſt Paganiſm did not light up religious "wars. That Jeſus, by eſtabliſhing a ſpiritual kingdom on "earth, has ſeparated the theological ſyſtem from the political; "that ſuch diviſions have aroſe from thence, as have never "ceaſed to agitate the Chriſtian people; that the pretended "kingdom of the other world has become, under a viſible "chief, the moſt violent deſpotiſm on this; that from the "double power of ſpiritual and temporal, has aroſe a conflict "of juriſdiction, that renders all good policy impoſſible in "papiſtical ſtates; that we can never know whether we ſhould "obey the prieſt or the magiſtrate: that the Chriſtian law is "detrimental to the ſtrong conſtitution of the ſtate: that "Chriſtianity is ſo evidently bad, that it is loſing time to amuſe "ourſelves with proving it to be ſo."

Now, in two works given to the public almoſt at the ſame time, how can we imagine that the ſame man could be ſo contrary to himſelf, and that he could ſeriouſly maintain two ſuch contrary propoſitions?

28. (p. 46.) In conſequence of M. Rouſſeau's hatred for the ſciences, I have ſeen the prieſts flatter themſelves with his approaching converſion. Why, ſay they, ſhould we deſpair of him? He protects ignorance and hates philoſophers: he cannot ſuffer a ſound reaſoner. *If John James was a ſaint, what could he do more?*

29. (p. 47.) All bigots are enemies to ſcience. Under Lewis XIV. they gave the name of Janſeniſts to thoſe learned men they would damn. They have ſince ſubſtituted the name of Encyclopediſts. That name, however, has not now in France any determinate meaning. It is an appellation that is preſumed

to be injurious, and which dunces make uſe of to defame any one, that has more ſenſe than themſelves.

30. (p. 47.) Deſpotiſm, that cruel ſcourge of humanity, is moſt commonly the production of national ſtupidity. Every people are free at firſt. To what cauſe attribute the loſs of liberty? To their ignorance and fooliſh confidence in ambitious men. Ambition and the people, are the girl and the lion in the fable; when ſhe had perſuaded the animal to let her cut his claws, and file his teeth, ſhe deliverd him up to the maſtiffs.

31. (p. 51.) The litterati, as well as the courtiers, are men; and have, therefore, often flattered the injuſtice of power: there is, however, one remarkable difference between them; men of letters have been always protected by princes of merit, they have only exaggerated their patrons virtues. They praiſed Auguſtus too much. But the courtiers praiſed both Nero and Caracalla.

32. (ibid.) When merit no longer leads to honours, it is deſpiſed; and, to compare ſmall things with great, it is with an empire, as with a college. When the prizes and principal places are for favourites, there is no longer any emulation among the pupils. All ſtudy is neglected. In like manner, when favour alone diſpoſes of the preferments in an empire, it becomes deſtitute of energy: great men are no longer ſeen.

33. (p. 52.) In the Eaſt, the beſt titles to a great fortune, are baſeneſs and ignorance. When an important place becomes vacant, the tyrant enters his anti-chamber: Have not I here, he ſays, ſome valet, of whom I can make a vizir? All the ſlaves proſtrate themſelves before him; the moſt deſpicable obtains the place. Can it then be wondered at, that the conduct of the vizir correſponds to the manner in which he is choſen?

34. (p. 55.) Neither the Romans, nor the French, had yet loſt their courage in the days of Auguſtus, and Lewis XIV.

35. (ibid.) M. Rouſſeau, the too frequent panegyriſt of ignorance, ſays, in ſome part of his works, "It is not the leaſt "of the benefactions of nature, that of preſerving men from "ſcience, and from the labour of inſtructing themſelves." But

replies

replies to him, a M. Gautier, might we not say, with equal propriety, "Nations, know that nature would not have you "nouriſh yourſelves with corn. The pain requiſite to till the "earth, declares that you ought to leave it uncultivated." This reply was not to the taſte of M. Rouſſeau, and in a letter wrote to M. Grimm, he ſays, "This M. Gautier did not reflect, "that with a little labour we are ſure to make bread? But "after a great deal of ſtudy, it is doubtful, whether we can "make a reaſonable man." I am not, in my turn, fully ſatisfied with this anſwer of M. Rouſſeau's. Is it certain, in the firſt place, that, in an unknown iſland, we can ſo eaſily make bread? Before we reap the corn, we muſt ſow it, and before ſowing the ſeed, we muſt drain the ground, cut down the trees, and cultivate the earth; and this cultivation is not to be performed without labour.

Even in thoſe countries where the land is beſt cultivated, how much of the huſbandman's care is requiſite? It is the labour of a whole year. But, ſuppoſe it were only neceſſary to turn up the earth, that ſuppoſes the invention of the implements of huſbandry; and the invention of theſe, ſuppoſes that of the forge, and the knowledge of mines, of the art of conſtructing furnaces, of mechanics, and hydraulics, in ſhort, of almoſt all the ſciences, from which M. Rouſſeau would *preſerve men*. We, therefore, cannot make bread without ſome care and induſtry.

"A reaſonable man, ſays M. Rouſſeau, is ſtill more diffi-"cult to make: we are not ſure to ſucceed after a great deal "of ſtudy." But, are we always ſure of a good harveſt. Does the painful labour of autumn ſecure an abundant harveſt for ſummer? Be it, however, difficult or not, to form a reaſonable man, the fact is, that he cannot be made ſo without inſtruction. What is a reaſonable man? One whoſe judgments are generally juſt. Now, to judge of the progreſs of a diſeaſe: of the excellence of a drama, or the beauty of a ſtatue, what preliminary knowledge is neceſſary? The ſciences, and the arts of medicine, poetry, and ſculpture. Does M. Rouſſeau mean by the word *reaſonable*, that the man ſhould obſerve a ſagacious conduct? But ſuch a conduct ſometimes ſuppoſes a profound knowledge of the human heart, and that knowledge is full as difficult as another. When the author of Emilius decrys in-

ſtruction, it is, he will ſay, becauſe he has ſometimes ſeen an intelligent man behave ill. That may be. The deſires of ſuch a man are often contrary to his knowledge. He may act ill and ſee well. This man, however, (M. Rouſſeau cannot deny) has but one cauſe of bad conduct in him, which is his criminal paſſions. Ignorance, on the contrary, has two: one is, the ſame paſſions, and the other, the ignorance of what man owes to man, that is to ſay, of his duty toward ſociety; and theſe duties are more extenſive than is commonly imagined. Inſtruction, therefore, is always uſeful.

SECTION

SECTION VI.

Of the evils produced by ignorance; that ignorance is not deſtructive of effeminacy: that it does not ſecure the fidelity of ſubjects; and that it determines the moſt important queſtions without examination. That of luxury cited as an example. The misfortunes into which ſuch judgments may ſometimes precipitate a nation. Of the contempt and hatred due to the protectors of ignorance.

CHAP. I.

Of the ignorance and effeminacy of nations.

IGNORANCE does not preſerve a people from effeminacy. It plunges them into it: degrades and corrupts them. The moſt ſtupid nations are not the moſt eſtimable for their magnanimity, their courage, and the ſeverity of their manners. The Portugueſe and modern Romans are ignorant; and they are not the leſs puſillanimous, voluptuous, and effeminate. It is the ſame with the greateſt part of the Oriental nations. In general, in every country where deſpotiſm and ſu-

perſtition engender ignorance, that in its turn engenders debility and ſloth.

Does government forbid me to think? I give myſelf up to idleneſs. An inhabitude to reflection renders application painful, and attention fatiguing (1). Where are then the charms of ſtudy? Indifferent to every ſort of knowledge no one has ſufficient intereſt with me to engage my attention, and it is only in agreeable ſenſations I can then ſeek my happineſs.

He that does not think would feel, and feel deliciouſly. Men would ever grow in ſenſations, if I may uſe the expreſſion, in proportion as they diminiſh in thoughts. But can we be conſtantly affected by voluptuous ſenſations? No: it is at intervals only we can enjoy them.

The interval that ſeparates men from theſe ſenſations is, among the ignorant and idle, filled up by diſguſt. To abridge its duration, he provokes himſelf to pleaſure, exhauſts his ſtrength and extinguiſhes deſire. Among all nations, who are the moſt generally given up to debauchery? Slaves and bigots.

There is no nation more corrupt than the Venetians *, and their corruptions, ſays M. Burke,

* See the Treatiſe of M. Burke on the Sublime. I here tranſlate him, but do not pretend to judge of a people I know only by the relations of others.

is the effect of the ignorance in which a despotic aristocracy holds the people. "No citizen dare "there think: to make use of his reason is a crime "that is the most punished. Now he who dare "not think would at least feel; and must from disgust deliver himself up to effeminacy. Who but "an ignorant and voluptuous people could support "the yoke of an aristocratic despotism?

"This the government knows, and encourages "its subjects to debauchery: it offers them at once "fetters and pleasures: they accept the one for the "other; and, in their base souls, the love of luxury "always outweighs that of liberty. The Venetian "is nothing better than a swine, that is nourished "by its master, for his use, and is kept in a stable, "where he is suffered to wallow in the mire.

"At Venice, great and little, man and woman, "clergy and laity, all are equally plunged in effe-"minacy. The nobles, always in dread of the "people, and of each other, become enervate and "degraded from policy, and corrupt themselves by "the same means they corrupt their subjects. They "seek to drown in luxury and debauchery, that "sensation of horror, which a state inquisition must "excite in a bold and elevated mind."

What M. Burke here says of the Venetians is equally applicable to the modern Romans, and in general to all ignorant and civilized nations. If the catholic religion, say the protestants, enervates

vates the ſoul, and at length ruins the empire where it is eſtabliſhed, it is by propagating ignorance and idleneſs, for idleneſs is the mother of all vices, moral and political.

Can the love of pleaſure then be a vice? No: nature leads men to the ſearch of it, and all men obey this impulſe of nature. But pleaſure, that is the relaxation of the intelligent, active, and induſtrious citizen, is the ſole occupation of the idle and ſtupid. The Spartans, as well as the Perſians, were ſenſible to love: but their love being different, made one of them a virtuous, and the other an effeminate people. Heaven has made women the diſpenſers of our moſt lively pleaſures. But could heaven intend, that, ſolely occupied with them, men ſhould, like the ſilly ſhepherds of Aſtrea, have no other employment than that of lovers? It is not in the trifling cares of a languiſhing paſſion, but in the activity of his mind, and the acquiſition of knowledge, in his labours and application, that man can find a remedy againſt diſquietude. Love is always a theological ſin, and becomes a moral ſin, when we make it a principal occupation: it then enervates the mind, and degrades the ſoul.

Nations may, after the Greeks and Romans, make love a divinity *, but not make themſelves

* Love is a powerful principle of activity in man. It has often changed the face of empires. Love and jealouſy opened the ports of Spain to the Moors, and deſtroyed the dynaſty of

its ſlaves. Hercules, who fought with Achelous and deprived him of Dejanira, was the ſon of Jupiter; but the Hercules who ſpun at the feet of Omphale was but a Sybarite. Every active and intelligent people reſemble the firſt of theſe; they love pleaſure, they conquer, but act with moderation; they think often, and ſometimes divert themſelves.

With regard to a ſlaviſh and ſuperſtitious people, they think ſeldom, are often diſquieted, would always divert themſelves; they provoke their appetites and become enervate. The ſole antidote to their diſquietude would be labour, application, and learning. But, as Sydney ſays on this ſubject, the knowledge of a people is always in proportion to their liberty, as their happineſs and power is always in proportion to their knowledge. Thus the Engliſh being more free, are commonly more learned than the French *, the French than the Spaniard, the Spaniard than the Portugueſe, and

of the Ommiades. Its influence on the moral world doubtleſs emboldened the poets to give it a power over the material world that it has not. Heſiod makes it the architect of the univerſe.

* France, they ſay, has in theſe later times produced more illuſtrious men than England. Be it ſo. It is not the leſs true, that the body of the French nation degenerates daily. France has neither the ſame intereſt, nor the ſame means of acquiring knowledge as England. France is now but little reſpectable. The citizen there without emulation ſinks into idleneſs. Merit without conſideration is deſpiſed by the great; and celebrated men now die without ſucceſſors.

the

the Portugueſe than the Moor. England is conſequently, in proportion to its extent, more powerful than France †, France than Spain, Spain than Portugal, and Portugal than Morocco. The more learning a people have, the more virtuous, powerful, and happy they are. It is to ignorance alone that the contrary effects are to be imputed. There is but one caſe where ignorance can be deſirable: and that is when all is deſperate in a ſtate, and when through the preſent evils others ſtill greater appear behind. Then ſtupidity is a bleſſing *: knowledge and foreſight are evils. It is then that ſhutting our eyes againſt the light, we would hide from ourſelves the calamities we cannot prevent. The ſituation of the inhabitant reſembles that of the mariner; the moſt diſtreſsful inſtant for him is not that when borne on the wreck of his veſſel in the midſt of the ſea, the love of life and hope make him think he ſees through the obſcurity of the night a neighbour-

† To prove the advantage of morality over materiality, heaven, ſay the Engliſh, has decreed, that Great Britain, properly ſpeaking, but a fourth part as large as Spain, and but one third of France, and leſs populous perhaps than the latter kingdom, ſhould command it by the ſuperiority of its government.

* In the empires of the Eaſt, the moſt pernicious and dangerous gift of heaven, ſays a celebrated traveller, would be a noble, elevated mind. Virtuous and rational ſouls bear impatiently the yoke of deſpotiſm. Now this impatience is a crime for which they would be puniſhed by the ſultan. Few Orientals expoſe themſelves to this danger.

ing

ing ſhore; but when the riſing morn, drawing back the curtains of the night, drives away the imaginary land from his ſight, and ſhows him at once the immenſity of the ſea and of his miſery; then hope, that was borne with him on the wreck, forſakes him, and gives place to deſpair.

But is there any kingdom in Europe where the misfortunes of the inhabitants are without remedy? Deſtroy ignorance and you will deſtroy all the ſeeds of moral evil.

Ignorance not only plunges the people into effeminacy, but even extinguiſhes in them the ſentiment of humanity. The moſt ignorant are the moſt barbarous. What people ſhowed themſelves in the laſt war the moſt inhuman? The ignorant Portugueſe. They cut off the noſes and ears of the Spaniſh priſoners. Why do the Engliſh and French ſhow themſelves the moſt generous? Becauſe they are leaſt ſtupid.

There is no inhabitant of Great Britain that has not more or leſs learning (2). Every Engliſhman is obliged to ſtudy by the form of his government (3). There is no miniſter who ought to be, and is, in ſome reſpects, more ſagacious. No one whom the national cry more immediately informs of his faults. Now if in the ſcience of government, as in every other ſcience, it is from the claſhing of contrary opinions that lights are produced, there is no country where adminiſtration

can

can be better informed, becauſe there is none where the preſs is more free.

It is not ſo at Liſbon. How can the citizen there ſtudy the ſcience of government? Is it in books? Superſtition will ſcarce ſuffer the people to read the Bible. Is it in converſation? It is dangerous there to talk of public affairs, and conſequently no one there concerns himſelf about them. Is it, laſtly, at the period a great man aſſumes an office? But then, as I have already ſaid, the time for forming principles is paſt; it is then the time to apply them: to execute and not to meditate. From whence then can ſuch a nation draw its generals and its miniſters? From among foreigners. Such is the debaſement to which ignorance reduces a nation.

CHAP. II.

Ignorance does not ſecure the fidelity of the ſubject.

SOME politicians have regarded ignorance as favourable to the maintenance of a prince's authority, as the ſupport of his crown and the ſafeguard of his perſon. Nothing is leſs proved by hiſtory. The ignorance of the people is indeed favourable to the prieſthood. It is not in Pruſſia, or England, where they can ſay all and write all, that attempts are made on the life of the

the monarch. But in Portugal, Turkey, Indoſtan, &c. In what age did they erect the ſcaffold for Charles I.? In that, when ſuperſtition commanded in England *, when the people, groaning under the yoke of ignorance, were ſtill without art or induſtry.

The life of George III. is well ſecured, and it is not to ſlavery and ignorance, but to learning and liberty, he owes his ſecurity. Is it ſo in Aſia? Do we there ſee any throne ſecure from the attempt of a murderer? Every power, without limits, is an uncertain power (4). The ages, in which princes are moſt expoſed to the ſtrokes of fanatiſm and ambition, are thoſe of ignorance and deſpotiſm. Ignorance and ſlavery deſtroy empires, and every monarch by whom they are propagated, digs the pit by which at leaſt his poſterity will be ſwallowed up.

If a prince ſo far debaſes mankind, as to ſhut their mouths againſt oppreſſion, he conſpires againſt himſelf. If a prieſt then, armed with the poignard of religion, or an uſurper at the head of a troop of banditti, march into the public place, he will be joined by thoſe very people, who if they had clear ideas of juſtice would, under the ſtandard of the lawful prince, have oppoſed and puniſhed the

* *At the time of the decapitation of Charles I. it was not ſuperſtition, but fanatiſm, that commanded in England. Perhaps, our author might reply, that theſe being two extremes, their effects are naturally ſimilar.*

prieſt

prieſt or uſurper. All the Eaſt is a witneſs of the truth of what I advance. Every throne has been there dyed with the blood of its ſovereign. Ignorance, therefore, does not ſecure the fidelity of the ſubject.

Its principal effects are to expoſe an empire to all the evils of a bad adminiſtration, to diffuſe over all minds a darkneſs, that ſoon paſſing from the governed to the governors, brings down tempeſts on the head of the monarch.

In poliſhed countries, if ignorance, the too frequent companion of deſpotiſm, expoſes the life of kings, occaſions diſorder in the finances, and injuſtice in the diſtribution of taxes; what man will dare to avow himſelf an enemy to ſcience, and a protector of ignorance? that, oppoſing all uſeful reformation, not only prolongs the duration of public calamities, but renders men alſo incapable of the determined attention, which the diſcuſſion of moſt political queſtions requires.

I ſhall take that of luxury, for an example. In how many lights may it be conſidered! How many contradictions do we find in the deciſions of moraliſts on this ſubject! How much diſcernment and attention are neceſſary to reſolve this political problem? How prejudicial are errors on ſimilar queſtions, ſometimes to empires; and, conſequently, how detrimental is ignorance to mankind?

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the queſtion concerning luxury.

WHAT is luxury? It is in vain to attempt a preciſe definition of it. The word Luxury, like that of Greatneſs, is one of thoſe comparative expreſſions, that do not offer to the mind any determinate idea: that only expreſs the relation two or more objects have to each other. It has no fixed ſenſe till the moment it is put, if I may uſe the expreſſion, into an equation, and we compare the luxury of one nation, claſs of men, or private perſon, with that of others of the ſame rank.

The Engliſh peaſant, well cloathed and fed, is in a ſtate of luxury, compared with a French peaſant. The man dreſſed in a coarſe cloth, is in a ſtate of luxury, compared to a ſavage covered with a bear's ſkin. All things, even to the feathers that adorn the cap of a wild Indian, may be regarded as luxury.

CHAP. IV.

If luxury be useful and necessary.

IT is the interest of every nation to form great men in the arts, the sciences of war, administration, &c. Now, great talents are constantly the fruit of study and application. Man, slothful by nature, cannot be drawn from his repose but by a powerful motive. What can that motive be? Large rewards. But of what nature should be the rewards decreed by a nation? Are we to understand by the word Reward, the gift of what is merely necessary? No, certainly. The word constantly implies the gift of some superfluity (5), either of the pleasures, or the conveniencies of life. Now, every one to whom these superfluities are granted, is in a state of luxury, compared with the majority of the people:

It is evident therefore, that as the minds of men cannot be drawn from a stagnation that is detrimental to society, but by the hope of rewards, that is, of superfluities, the necessity of luxury is apparent, and that in this sense it is useful.

But, they will say, it is not against this sort of luxury or superfluity, the reward of great talents, that the moralists contend; but against that de-

struc-

ſtructive luxury which produces intemperance, and above all, that avidity of wealth, the corruptor of the manners of a nation, and forerunner of its ruin.

I have often attended to the diſcourſes of moraliſts, and frequently recollect their vague panegyrics on temperance, and their ſtill more vague declamations againſt riches; and to the preſent hour, I have not found one among them who has fully examined the accuſations brought againſt luxury, and the calamities that are imputed to it; or that has, in my opinion, reduced the queſtion to that degree of ſimplicity which is requiſite to its ſolution.

If the moraliſts will take the luxury of France for an example, I agree with them to examine its advantages and diſadvantages. But before we go further, is it certain, as they inceſſantly repeat,

1. That luxury produces national intemperance?

2. That this intemperance produces all the evils attributed to it?

CHAP. V.

Of luxury and temperance.

THERE are two ſorts of luxury: the firſt is, a national luxury, founded on a certain equality in the diſtribution of the public wealth. It makes no great appearance (6), yet extends to almoſt all the inhabitants of a country. This diſtribution does not permit the citizens to live in the pomp and intemperance of a nabob, but in a certain ſtate of eaſe and luxury, when compared with the citizens of another country. Such is the ſituation of an Engliſh peaſant *, compared with a French peaſant. Now, the firſt of theſe is not always the moſt temperate.

The ſecond ſort of luxury leſs general (7), more apparent, and confined to a claſs of citizens more or leſs numerous, is the effect of a very unequal diſtribution of the riches of a nation. This luxury is that of deſpotic governments, where the purſes of the little are inceſſantly emptyed to

* The Spartans were ſtrong and robuſt; they were therefore ſufficiently well fed. The peaſants, in certain countries, are meagre and weak; they have not therefore ſufficient nouriſhment. From whence we conclude, that the Spartans lived in a ſtate of luxury, compared with the inhabitants of ſome other countries.

fill

fill thoſe of the great; where ſome are gorged with ſuperfluities, while others want what is neceſſary (8). The inhabitants of ſuch a country conſume but little: he that has nothing can buy nothing. They are the more temperate in proportion as they are indigent.

Miſery is always ſober, and the luxury of theſe governments does not produce intemperance, but national temperance, that is, temperance in the greateſt number.

Let us now ſee whether this temperance be ſo fruitful of prodigies as the moraliſts pretend. If we conſult hiſtory, we ſhall find that the people commonly the moſt corrupt, are the ſober inhabitants who are in ſubjection to arbitrary power: that the nations reputed moſt virtuous, are, on the contrary, thoſe free nations whoſe riches are the moſt equally divided, and whoſe citizens are conſequently not always the moſt temperate. In general, the more money a man has, the more he expends, and the more freely he lives. Frugality, a virtue doubtleſs reſpectable and meritorious in an individual, is always in a nation the effect of a powerful cauſe. The virtue of a people is almoſt always *the virtue of neceſſity:* and frugality, for that reaſon, rarely produces in empires the miracles attributed to it.

The Aſiatics, who were ſlaves, poor, and neceſſarily temperate under Darius and Tigranes, never had the virtues of their conquerors.

The Portugueſe, like the Orientals, ſurpaſs the Engliſh in ſobriety, but do not equal them in valour, induſtry, virtue, in a word, in happineſs (9). If the French were beat in the laſt wars, it is not to the intemperance of their ſoldiers their defeats are to be attributed. The greateſt part of the ſoldiery are to be taken from the claſs of huſbandmen, and the French huſbandmen have an habit of ſobriety *.

If the moraliſts continually extol frugality, and decry luxury, it is, becauſe being reſpectable in their own eyes, they mean to honour themſelves by theſe declamations; becauſe, having no clear ideas of luxury, they confound it with the frequently pernicious cauſe by which it is produced; and becauſe they think themſelves virtuous for being auſtere, and rational for being diſcontented. Now, diſcontent is not reaſon.

Let men, therefore, diſtruſt in this reſpect the modern moraliſts: they have but ſuperficial ideas concerning this queſtion. But, it will be ſaid, the writers of antiquity have, in like manner, regarded luxury as the corruptor of Aſia. They then deceived themſelves in like manner with the moderns.

To know if it be luxury, or the cauſe of luxury, that deſtroys in man all love of virtue,

* *A Frenchman will reply to this, that it was not indeed to the intemperance of the ſoldiers, but to the debauchery and effeminacy of the officers and generals, that the French army owed its defeats.*

that

that corrupts and debaſes the manners of a nation, we muſt firſt determine what is meant by the term of *a baſe people*. Is it one of whom all the individuals are corrupted? There is no ſuch people: there is no country where the order of the common citizens, always oppreſſed, and rarely oppreſſors, do not love and eſteem virtue. Their intereſt lead them to it. It is not ſo with the order of great men. Their intereſt is to be unjuſt with impunity; it is to ſtifle in the hearts of men every ſentiment of equity. This intereſt commands imperiouſly over the great, but not over the reſt of the nation. The tempeſt ravages the ſurface of the ſea, but its depths are always tranquil. Such are the inferior claſs of citizens, in almoſt every country. Corruption ſlowly approaches the labourers of the earth, and it is they that compoſe the greateſt part of every nation.

Men, therefore, can mean by *a baſe nation*, that only where the people in power, that is, the governing party, are enemies to the party governed, or at leaſt indifferent to their happineſs *.

* The words *corruption of manners*, ſignify nothing more than the diviſion between public and private intereſt. At what time does this diviſion happen? When all the riches and power of a ſtate is collected into a few hands. There is then no connection between the different claſſes of the citizens. The great, wholly directed by their private intereſt, and indifferent to that of the public, will ſacrifice the ſtate to their particular paſſions. Is it neceſſary, to be revenged of an enemy,

Now, this indifference is not the effect of luxury, but of the cauſe that produces it, that is, the exceſſive power of the great, and the conſequent contempt in which they hold their fellow-citizens.

In the hive of human ſociety, to preſerve order and juſtice, and to chaſe away vice and corruption, it is neceſſary that all the individuals be equally employed, and forced to concur equally in the general good, and that the labour be equally divided among them.

If there be any whoſe riches and birth exempt them from all employment, there will be diviſions and unhappineſs in the hive. The idle will die of diſguſt: they will be envied without any reaſon for envy, becauſe they will not be happy. Their idleneſs, however, at the ſame time it is diſguſtful to themſelves, is deſtructive to the general welfare. They will devour with diſcontent the honey that the others pro-

that a negotiation be broke off, the finances be neglected, a war be declared unjuſt, a battle be loſt? They will do all, and agree to all, to gratify their caprice; grant all to favour, and nothing to merit. The courage and diligence of the ſoldiers, and inferior officers, will remain without recompence. What is the conſequence? That the magiſtrates have no longer integrity, nor the ſoldiers courage. That indifference ſucceeds in their minds, to the love of juſtice, and of their country; and that ſuch a nation will be held in contempt by others, and fall into debaſement. Now, this debaſement will not be the effect of its luxury, but of a too unequal diſtribution of power and riches, of which luxury itſelf is an effect.

duce;

duce; the labourers will die of hunger, and the idlers will not be more happy.

To fix the happineſs and virtue of a nation on a ſolid foundation, it muſt reſt on a reciprocal dependence between all the orders of citizens. If there be ſtateſmen inveſted with unlimited power, and that have not, at leaſt for the preſent, any thing to hope or fear from the love or hatred of their inferiors, then all mutual dependence between the great and the little will be broke, and theſe two orders of citizens, under the ſame name, will compoſe two rival nations. The man in power will then indulge himſelf in all things, he will, without remorſe, ſacrifice to his caprice the happineſs of a whole nation.

If the corruption of the people in power never is more manifeſt than in the ages of the greateſt luxury, it is becauſe in thoſe ages the riches of a nation are collected into the leaſt number of hands, when the great men are moſt powerful, and, conſequently, moſt corrupt.

To know the ſource of their corruption, and the origin of their power and riches, and of that diviſion of intereſts among citizens, who, under the ſame name, form two inimical nations, we muſt remount to the formation of the firſt ſocieties.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the formation of colonies.

SOME families paſs over to an iſland. We will ſuppoſe the ſoil good, but uncultivated. What at the moment of debarkation is the firſt care of theſe families? To conſtruct huts, and turn up an extent of ground ſufficient for their ſubſiſtence.

At this period, wherein conſiſts the riches of this iſland? In its harveſts, and the labour by which they are produced. If this iſland contains more land than is neceſſary for the cultivators, the rich among them will be thoſe that have the ſtrongeſt and moſt active arms.

The intereſts of this riſing ſociety are at firſt not complicate, and conſequently few laws will there ſuffice: they may be almoſt all reduced to the prevention of theft and murder. Such laws are always juſt, becauſe they are made by the conſent of all, and becauſe a law generally adopted in a riſing ſtate, is always conformable to the intereſt of the majority, and conſequently wiſe and beneficent.

We will ſuppoſe this ſociety to elect a chief: he will only be a chief in war, under the orders of whom they combat pirates, and new coloniſts that would eſtabliſh themſelves in this iſland. This chief, like every other coloniſt, will poſſeſs

poſſeſs no more land than he has cultivated. The only favour they can grant him, is the choice of his ground. He will be in other reſpects without power.

But will the ſucceſſors to the firſt chief long remain in this ſtate of impotency? By what means will they free themſelves from it, and at laſt arrive at arbitrary power?

The object of moſt of them will be to ſubject the iſle they inhabit. But their efforts will be vain, while the nation is not numerous. It is difficult to eſtabliſh deſpotiſm in a country that being newly inhabited, is not populous. In all monarchies, the progreſs of power is ſlow. Of this, the time employed by the ſovereigns of Europe in ſubjecting their great vaſſals is a proof. The prince who too haſtily attacks the property, the life and liberty of powerful proprietors, and would load the people with taxes, will deſtroy himſelf. All, great and little, will revolt againſt him. The monarch would have neither money to raiſe an army, nor an army to fight againſt his people.

The time at which the power of a prince or chief increaſes, is that when the nation is become rich and numerous, when each citizen ceaſes to be a ſoldier *, or when, to repell an

* There is, perhaps, but one method of preſerving an empire from the deſpotiſm of an army, and that is, by the inhabitants being at once, as at Sparta, citizens and ſoldiers.

enemy,

enemy, the people conſent to raiſe troops, and keep them continually in pay. If the chief preſerve the command of them in peace as well as in war, his credit inſenſibly augments; he profits by it to enlarge his army. When it is ſufficiently ſtrong, the ambitious chief plucks off the maſk; oppreſſes the people, deſtroys their property, and plunders the nation: for man, in general, appropriates all he can raviſh, and rapine cannot be reſtrained but by ſevere laws, and laws are impotent againſt a chief and his army.

It is thus that a firſt tax frequently furniſhes an uſurper with the means of impoſing others, till at laſt, armed with an irreſiſtible power, he can, as at Conſtantinople, ſwallow up by his court and his army, all the riches of the nation. The people, then weak and indigent, are attacked by an incurable malady. No law can then ſecure to the citizens their lives, their property, and their liberty.

For want of this ſecurity, all returns into a ſtate of war, and all ſociety is diſſolved. If the inhabitants ſtill live in the ſame cities, it is no longer in union, but in a common ſervitude. A handful of free men are then ſufficient to overturn an empire, in appearance moſt formidable.

If the army with which the uſurper keeps the nation in fetters, be beat three or four times, he has no reſource in the love and valour of his people. He and his ſoldiers are hated, as well as

feared.

feared. The citizens of Conſtantinople regard the Janizaries as the accomplices of the Sultan, a ſet of ruffians by whoſe aid he pillages the empire. If a conqueror attempt to free the people from the fear of the army, they favour his enterprize, and regard him as their avenger.

The Romans were a hundred years at war with the Volſci: they employed five hundred years in conquering Italy: they but ſhowed themſelves in Aſia, and it became ſubject to them. The power of Antiochus and Tigranes vaniſhed at their ſight, as that of Darius at the ſight of Alexander.

Deſpotiſm is the old age and laſt diſeaſe of an empire. This malady never attacks it in its youth. The exiſtence of deſpotiſm commonly ſuppoſes a people to be already rich and numerous. But is it poſſible that the grandeur, wealth, and extreme population of a ſtate, can ſometimes have ſuch fatal conſequences?

To elucidate this point, let us conſider the effects of extreme riches, and great increaſe of inhabitants in a kingdom. Perhaps we ſhall diſcover in this increaſe, the firſt ſeeds of a deſpotic power.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the multiplication of mankind in a ſtate, and of its effects.

IN the iſland at firſt uncultivated, in which I placed a ſmall number of families, if we ſuppoſe theſe families to multiply, the iſle will become provided with a number of labourers ſufficient for its culture, and a number of artiſans neceſſary to a nation of agricultors: the union of theſe families will ſoon form a numerous people. If this nation continue to multiply, there will be born in the iſland more men than can be employed in cultivating the earth, and in the arts ſubſervient to that cultivation. What will become of theſe ſuperfluous inhabitants? The more they increaſe, the greater will be their charge to the ſtate, from whence it will be neceſſary, either that the ſuperfluity be conſumed by a war, or that a law be enacted, as in China, for the expoſing of children (10).

A man without property, and without employment in a ſociety, has only three things to choſe; either to leave his country and ſeek a ſubſiſtence elſewhere, or to rob for a maintenance, or to invent ſome new article of commerce, in exchange for which his fellow-citizens may ſupply his wants. I ſhall not enquire what becomes of the robber,

robber, or voluntary exile. They no longer belong to this ſociety. My only object is the inventor of a new article of utility or luxury. We will ſuppoſe him to diſcover the ſecret of painting on cloth, and that this invention be to the taſte of but few of the inhabitants, but few of them, therefore, will exchange their commodities for his cloth (11). But if a taſte for this ſort of cloth become general, and there be great demand for it, what will he do to anſwer that demand? He will collect more or leſs of thoſe men I call ſuperfluous, ſet up a manufacture in a convenient place, moſt likely on the ſide of a river, whoſe branches extend a long way into the country, and will facilitate the tranſport of his merchandize. Now we will ſuppoſe that the continual increaſe of inhabitants gives riſe to the invention of ſome other commodity, ſome other article of luxury, and that a new manufacture be ſet up. The undertaker, for the advantage of his commerce, will naturally fix it on the ſide of the ſame river. He will, therefore, erect a building near the other's. Several of theſe manufactures will form a village, and then a town, that will ſoon contain wealthy citizens; for the profits of commerce are always very great, when the traders being few, have but few rivals.

The riches of this town will draw the pleaſures thither. To partake of theſe pleaſures, the rich proprietors of lands will quit the country, to paſs

ſome

ſome months of the year in the town, and for that purpoſe build houſes there. The town increaſes daily, becauſe poverty there finds more reſources, vice more impunity, and luxury more means of gratification. This town, at laſt, takes the name of capital.

Such are in this iſland the firſt effects of the great multiplication of its inhabitants. Another effect of the ſame cauſe will be the indigence of the greateſt part of the people. By the continual increaſe of their number, there will be more workmen than work: competition will lower the price of labour: that workman will be preferred who ſells his goods cheapeſt, that is, who contents himſelf with the leaſt profit. Then indigence extends itſelf; the poor ſell, the rich buy; the number of poſſeſſors diminiſh, and the laws become daily more ſevere.

A people of proprietors may be governed by gentle laws. Confiſcations of property, partial or total, is there ſufficient to ſuppreſs crimes? Among the Germans, Gauls, and Scandinavians, fines, more or leſs ſevere, were the only puniſhments inflicted for different offences.

Where non-proprietors compoſe the greateſt part of a nation, it is different. They can be governed by harſh laws only: when a man is poor, and cannot be fined, he muſt be puniſhed in his perſon; and from hence ariſe corporeal puniſhments. Now, theſe puniſhments at firſt inflicted

flicted on the poor, are in the courſe of time, extended to proprietors, and all the citizens are then governed by the laws of blood. All things concur to eſtabliſh theſe laws.

Does every citizen poſſeſs ſome property in a ſtate? The deſire of preſerving it is doubtleſs, the general deſign of a nation. There are few thefts committed. Do the generality, on the contrary, live without property? Theft is the general aim of that nation; and robbers multiply. Now this ſpirit of robbery ſpreading itſelf throughout, neceſſarily occaſions frequent acts of violence.

Let us ſuppoſe, that by the ſlowneſs of criminal proceedings, and the facility with which a man without property can tranſport himſelf into another country, the guilty almoſt always eſcape puniſhment, and crimes multiply daily. To prevent this, a citizen muſt be arreſted on the firſt ſuſpicion. But an arreſt is itſelf an arbitrary puniſhment, which being ſoon exerciſed on proprietors themſelves, will ſubſtitute ſlavery in the place of liberty. What remedy is there for this national evil? Is there any method by which the gentle laws can be recalled? I know but one, which would be to multiply the number of proprietors, by making a new diſtribution of the lands. But this diſtribution is always difficult to execute. Thus the unequal partition of the national wealth, and the too great increaſe of men

without property, producing at the ſame time in an empire vices and ſanguinary laws, at laſt develop thoſe ſeeds of deſpotiſm, which ought to be regarded as a new effect of the ſame cauſe *.

When a numerous people are not, like the Greeks and Swiſs, divided into a certain number

* The evils ariſing from extreme population, were known to the ancients; and there were no means they did not employ to diminiſh it. The Socratic paſſion in Crete was one of them. This paſſion, ſays M. Goques, counſellor in parliament, was there authoriſed by the laws of Minos †.

If a young man hired himſelf as a catamite, for a certain term, and run away from the houſe of him with whom he had engaged to live, the laws oblige him to return, and remain there till the expiration of the term. The reaſon of this odd law, ſay Plato and Ariſtotle, was the fear they had in Crete of a too great population.

It was with the ſame view that Pythagoras enjoined his diſciples abſtinence and faſting. They that faſt, do not get many children. To the Pythagoreans ſucceeded the Veſtals, and laſtly the Monks, who being, perhaps, enjoined the law of continence, for the ſame reaſon are, in fact, no other than repreſentatives of the ancient pederaſts.

† *This was certainly a very fooliſh law of the wiſe Minos, and which the dread of exceſſive population could by no means juſtify, as there were many other obvious means of preventing it. It is not unlikely, however, that the counſellor in parliament here mentioned, imagined he diſcovered this law among thoſe of Minos, in order to palliate his own conduct. This practice, however prepoſterous, was not ſo barbarous as that of expoſing their young children to periſh in the highways, and which was likewiſe aſcribed to the dread of exceſſive population. If this cuſtom, common among the wiſe Grecians, were to be adopted by the moſt ignorant of the European nations, we ſhould load them, and juſtly too, with the appellation of obdurate ſcoundrels.*

of

of federative republics; but compoſe, like thoſe of Great Britain, one nation, the people being then too numerous, and too far diſtant from each other, to deliberate on general affairs, are obliged to appoint repreſentatives for each borough, city, province, &c. Theſe repreſentatives aſſemble in the capital, and it is there they ſeparate their intereſt from that of the repreſented.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the diviſion of intereſts among the citizens, produced by their great increaſe.

WHEN the inhabitants, by becoming too numerous to aſſemble in the ſame place, have appointed repreſentatives, thoſe repreſentatives taken from the body of the people, choſe by them, and honoured by the choice, propoſe at firſt ſuch laws only as are conformable to the public welfare. The law of property is by them held ſacred. They reſpect it the more, as being under the inſpection of the nation, if they ſhould betray the confidence repoſed in them, they would be puniſhed by diſgrace, and, perhaps, by a more ſevere chaſtiſement.

It is, therefore, as I have ſaid, when the people having formed an immenſe capital; when the complicated intereſts of the different orders of the

ſtate have multiplied the laws, when, to avoid the fatiguing ſtudy of them, the people repoſe that duty in their repreſentatives; and laſtly, when the inhabitants, ſolely employed in augmenting the value of their lands, ceaſe to be citizens, and give themſelves up to agriculture; that the repreſentatives ſeparate their intereſts from that of their conſtituents.

It is then that an indolence in the minds of the conſtituents, and an active deſire of power in the repreſentatives, announce a great change in the ſtate. At that period, all things favour the ambition of the latter.

When, in conſequence of their increaſe, one people are ſubdivided into ſeveral, and that there are reckoned in the ſame nation the rich, the poor, land-holders, merchants, &c. it is not poſſible, that the intereſts of theſe ſeveral orders of citizens ſhould be always the ſame. Nothing, in certain reſpects, is more contrary to the intereſt of a nation, than a great number of men without property. They are ſo many ſecret enemies, whom a tyrant may at his pleaſure arm againſt the proprietors. Yet nothing is more agreeable to the intereſt of the manufacturer. The more neceſſitous people there are, the leſs he will pay for their labour. The intereſt of the trader, is therefore ſometimes incompatible with that of the public. Now, the body of traders is often the moſt powerful in a ſtate; it includes an infinite

finite number of ſeamen, porters, and workmen of every ſort, who having no other riches than that of their labour, are always ready to ſerve any one that will pay them.

When a nation is compoſed of an infinity of different people, under the ſame name, and whoſe intereſts are more or leſs contradictory, it is evident, that for want of unity in the national intereſt, and a real unanimity in the regulations of the ſeveral orders of conſtituents, the repreſentative, by alternately favouring this or that particular order of citizens, may, by ſowing diviſion among them, render himſelf ſo much the more formidable to all of them, as by arming one part of the nation againſt the other, he ſecures himſelf againſt all inquiry.

Impunity gives him more importance, and more audacity. He at laſt perceives, that in the midſt of the anarchy of national intereſts, he may, from day to day, become more independent, and daily appropriate more authority and riches; that with great wealth he can keep in pay thoſe, who being without property, ſell themſelves to any one that will buy them; and that the acquiſition of each new degree of authority, will furniſh him with new means of uſurping a ſtill greater power.

When animated with this hope, the repreſentatives have, by a conduct as crafty as diſhoneſt,

acquired a power equal to that of the whole nation, from that moment there ariſes a diviſion of intereſt between the parties governing and governed. So long as the latter is compoſed of proprietors of ſufficient affluence, brave and intelligent; in a condition to ſhake, and even to deſtroy the authority of the repreſentatives, the body of the nation is in good condition, it is even flouriſhing. But can this equilibrium of power long ſubſiſt between theſe two orders of citizens? Is it not to be feared, that the riches accumulating inſenſibly, in a ſmall number of hands, the number of proprietors (the ſole ſupport of the public liberty) ſhould daily diminiſh *. That the ſpirit of uſurpation, always more active in the repreſentatives, than the ſpirit of conſervation and defence in the conſtituents, ſhould at laſt turn the balance of power in favour of the former? To

* When a man grows rich by commerce, he adds the property of many ſmall proprietors to his own. The number of proprietors, and conſequently of thoſe whoſe intereſt is moſt cloſely connected with the national intereſt, is diminiſhed. On the contrary, the number of men without property, and without intereſt in the public welfare, is increaſed. Now, if ſuch men are always ready to let themſelves out to any one that will pay them, how can it be imagined, that the man in power will not make uſe of them, to rule over his fellow-citizens?

Such is the neceſſary effect of a too great great increaſe of people in an empire. It is the evil circle that has been hitherto run through by all the known forms of government,

what

what other cauſe can we aſcribe that deſpotiſm, which has hitherto put an end to all the different forms of government?

Is it not evident, that in a vaſt and populous country, the diviſion of intereſt among the governed, muſt always furniſh the governors with the means of uſurping an authority, that man's natural love of power makes him always deſire?

All empires have had an end: and it was at the period when thoſe nations, becoming numerous, were governed by repreſentatives; and when thoſe repreſentatives, favoured by the diviſion of intereſts among the conſtituents, have been able to make themſelves independent, that we ſhould date the decadency of empires.

In every country, the great increaſe of inhabitants has been the unknown, neceſſary, and remote cauſe of the diſſipation of morals *. If the nations of Aſia, always cited among the moſt

* But is there no law that can prevent the fatal effects of a too great increaſe of inhabitants, and cloſely connect the intereſt of the repreſentors, with that of the repreſented? Theſe two intereſts are, doubtleſs, better connected in England than in Turkey, where the Sultan declares himſelf the ſole repreſentative of his nation. But if there be forms of government more favourable the one than the other, to the union of private with public intereſt, there is no one where this great moral and political problem has been perfectly ſolved. Now, till its complete ſolution, the increaſe of people muſt, in every government, produce a corruption of morals.

corrupt, firſt received the yoke of deſpotiſm, it was becauſe of all parts of the world, Aſia was the firſt inhabited and poliſhed.

Its extreme population made it ſubject to ſovereigns: theſe ſovereigns accumulated the riches of the ſtate on a ſmall number of noblemen, and inveſted them with an exceſſive power; and theſe noblemen plunging into luxury, languiſhed in that corruption, that is, in that indifference for the public welfare, with which hiſtory has always ſo juſtly reproached the Aſiatics.

After having haſtily conſidered the great cauſes, whoſe development animated ſocieties, from the moment of their formation to that of their decadence; after having pointed out the different ſtates and ſituations, through which theſe ſocieties paſſed, to fall at laſt into arbitrary power; let us now examine, why this power once eſtabliſhed, makes in a nation a diſtribution of riches, that being more unequal in a deſpotic government than any other, hurls it more rapidly into ruin.

CHAP. IX.

Of the too unequal partition of the national wealth.

THERE is now no form of government, where the national wealth is, or can be, equally divided. For men to flatter themſelves with this equal diſtribution among a people ſubject to arbitrary power, is a folly.

If in deſpotic governments, the riches of the whole nation be ſwallowed up by a ſmall number of families, the reaſon is plain.

When a people acknowledge a maſter who can impoſe taxes on them in an arbitrary manner, and transfer at pleaſure the property of one claſs of citizens, to that of another; the riches of the nation *, muſt, in a ſhort time, be collected into the hands of favourites. But what advantage accrues to the prince from this evil of the ſtate? The following:

* The more a prince increaſes in power, the more inacceſſible he is. Under the vain pretext of rendering his royal perſon more reſpectable, the favourites ſcreen him from all eyes. Approach is interdicted to his ſubjects. The monarch becomes an inviſible god. Now, what do the favourites intend by this apotheoſis? To debaſe the prince, that they may govern him. For this purpoſe, they baniſh him to a ſeraglio, or ſurround him by their little ſociety; and all the wealth of the nation is then abſorbed by a very few families.

An

An arbitrary monarch, in quality of a man, loves himſelf before all others. He would be happy, and feels, like a private perſon, that he participates the joy and ſorrow of all that ſurround him. His intereſt is that his people, that is his courtiers, ſhould be content. Now their thirſt for gold is inſatiable. If they be in this reſpect without modeſty, how can he inceſſantly refuſe what they inceſſantly demand, without diſcontenting his intimates, and expoſing himſelf to the contagious chagrin of all that ſurround him? Few men have that courage. He therefore continually empties the purſes of his people into thoſe of his courtiers; and it is among his favourites he divides almoſt all the riches of the ſtate. This partition being made, what bounds can be ſet to their luxury? The greater it is, and the more conformable to the ſituation in which the empire then is, the more that luxury is uſeful. The evil is only in the productive cauſe, that is, in the too unequal partition of the national wealth, and in the exceſſive power of the prince, who, but ill inſtructed in his duty, and prodigal from weakneſs, thinks himſelf generous when he is unjuſt (12).

But will not the cries of miſery inform him of his diſgrace? The throne on which a Sultan is ſeated, is inacceſſible to the complaints of his ſubjects; they cannot reach ſo far. Beſide, what is

their

their happineſs to him, if their diſcontent have no immediate influence on his preſent felicity?

Luxury, as I have proved, is in moſt countries the immediate and neceſſary effect of deſpotiſm. It is, therefore, deſpotiſm, that the enemies of luxury ſhould oppoſe (13). To ſuppreſs an effect, we ſhould deſtroy the cauſe. If there be a mean of operating a happy change in this matter, it is by an inſenſible change in the laws, and the adminiſtration (14).

It is neceſſary, for the happineſs of the prince himſelf, and his poſterity, that auſtere moraliſts fix the bounds of taxes ſo firmly, that the ſovereign can never diſplace them. From the moment that the laws, like an inſurmountable obſtacle, oppoſe the prodigality of the monarch, the courtiers will ſet bounds to their deſires and demands; they will not aſk what they know they cannot obtain.

The prince, they will ſay, muſt be leſs happy. He will, doubtleſs, have about him fewer courtiers, and ſuch as are leſs ſervile; but their ſervility is not, perhaps, ſo neceſſary to his happineſs, as may be imagined. When the favourites of a king are free and virtuous, the ſovereign accuſtoms himſelf inſenſibly to their virtue. He does not find himſelf the worſe, and his people find themſelves much better.

Arbitrary power, therefore, only ſerves to haſten the unequal partition of the riches of a nation.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The cauſes of the too great inequality in the fortunes of the people.

IN countries that are free, and governed by wiſe laws, no man, doubtleſs, has power to impoveriſh his nation to inrich a few individuals. In theſe countries, however, all the citizens do not enjoy the ſame fortune. The junction of riches there happens more ſlowly, but it happens at laſt.

It is quite right, that the moſt induſtrious ſhould gain moſt; that the moſt thrifty ſhould ſave moſt; and that by riches already acquired, more ſhould be gained. There are, moreover, who accumulate wealth by inheritance: and there are merchants, who by venturing large capitals with their veſſels, make great profit; in every ſort of commerce, money gets money. Its unequal diſtribution, therefore, is a neceſſary conſequence of its introduction into a ſtate (15).

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the means of preventing the too rapid accumulation of riches in a few hands.

THERE are a thoufand methods of producing this effect. What can hinder a people from declaring themſelves the heirs of the whole nation; and in that caſe, on the deceaſe of a very rich individual, dividing among ſeveral a property that would be too conſiderable for a ſingle perſon?

Why may not a people, after the example of thoſe of Lucca, ſo proportion the taxes to the wealth of each individual, that when his land exceeds a certain number of acres, the tax on the ſupernumerary acres may exceed the rent? In ſuch a country, there can certainly be no very great acquiſitions.

A hundred laws of this kind might be invented. There are, therefore, a multitude of ways of preventing a too ſpeedy accumulation of wealth into a ſmall number of hands, and of checking the too rapid progreſs of luxury.

But can we, in a country where money is current, promiſe ourſelves conſtantly to maintain a juſt equilibrium among the fortunes of the citizens, and that the riches may not at length be diſtributed

distributed in a very unequal manner, and luxury be introduced and increase? This project is impossible. The rich, furnished with necessaries, will always employ their superfluous wealth in the purchase of superfluous commodities (16). Sumptuary laws, they will say, may suppress in them this desire. It is true. But the rich then having no longer the free use of their money, it will appear to them less desirable, and they will make fewer efforts to obtain it. Now, in every country where money is current, perhaps the love of money, as I shall prove further on, is a principle of life and activity, whose destruction draws after it that of the state.

The result of this chapter is, that money being once introduced, and always unequally divided among the citizens, will, at length, necessarily introduce a taste for superfluities. The question concerning luxury, is therefore now reduced to the inquiry, whether the introduction of money into a state be useful or detrimental.

In the present condition of Europe, all inquiry of this kind may appear superfluous. Whatever may be said, the French, English, and Dutch, will never be induced to throw their gold into the sea. This question, however, is in itself so curious, that the reader will doubtless consider with some pleasure, the different conditions of two nations, in one of which money is current, and in the other is not.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of thoſe countries where money is not current.

WHEN money has no value in a country, by what method can commerce be carried on? By exchange. But exchanges are troubleſome. So that there is little traffic, and no works of luxury. The inhabitants of theſe countries may be wholeſomely fed, and well cloathed, and yet not know what in France is called luxury.

But will not a people without money and luxury, have in ſome reſpects certain advantages over an opulent people? Yes, certainly: and theſe advantages will be ſuch, that in a country where the value of money is unknown, perhaps it could not be there introduced without a crime.

A people without money, if they be intelligent, are commonly a people without tyrants *. Arbitrary power is difficult to eſtabliſh in a country without canals, without commerce, and high roads. The prince, who raiſes his taxes in commodities, that is, in proviſions, can ſeldom raiſe and keep

* We may alſo ſay without enemies. Who will attack a country where nothing is to be got but blows. We know, beſide, that a people, ſuch as the Lacedæmonians for example, if they be numerous, are invincible.

in

in pay a number of men ſufficient to put his people in fetters.

It would have been difficult for an Eaſtern monarch to have ſeated and maintained himſelf on the throne of Sparta, or of riſing Rome.

Now, if deſpotiſm be the moſt cruel ſcourge of nations, and the moſt fruitful ſource of their evils, the non-introduction of money, which commonly defends them from tyranny, muſt be regarded as an advantage.

But did they enjoy the conveniencies of life at Sparta? O ye rich and powerful! why do you aſk this queſtion? Are you ignorant that the lands of luxury are thoſe where the people are the moſt miſerable?

Solely employed in gratifying your deſires, do you take yourſelves for the whole nation? Are you the only beings in nature? Have you no brethren? O men! void of ſhame, humanity, and virtue, who concenter in your own perſons all your affections, and inceſſantly create for yourſelves new wants; know that Sparta was without luxury, without abundance, and that Sparta was happy! Is it in fact the ſumptuoſity of furniture, or the refinements of effeminacy, that conſtitutes human felicity? There would then be very few happy. Is happineſs to be found in the exquiſite delicacies of the table? The different manners of preparing their repaſts, by different nations, prove that

good cheer to be that only to which we have been accuſtomed.

If diſhes artfully prepared irritate my appetite, and give me agreeable ſenſations, they give me alſo laſſitudes and diſorders; ſo that all things conſidered the temperate man is, at the end of the year, at leaſt as happy as the glutton *. Whoever has an appetite, and can gratify it, is content †. When a man is well cloathed and fed, the remainder of his happineſs depends on the manner, more or leſs agreeable, in which he fills up, as I ſhall preſently prove, *the interval between a gratified and a riſing want*. Now, in this reſpect, nothing was wanting to the happineſs of the Lacedæmonians: and notwithſtanding the apparent auſterity of their manners, of all the Greeks, ſays Xenophon, they were the moſt hap-

* *Now hear what bleſſings temperance can bring,*
(Thus ſaid our friend §, and what he ſaid I ſing)
Firſt health: the ſtomach (cram'd from ev'ry diſh,
A tomb of boil'd and roaſt, and fleſh and fiſh,
Where bile, and wind, and phlegm, and acid jar,
And all the man is one inteſtine war);
Remembers oft the ſchool boy's ſimple fare,
The temperate ſleeps, and ſpirits light as air.
Pope's Imitation of Horace.

§ *Mr. Bethel.*

† When the peaſant has bacon and cabbage in his pot, he aſks not the pullet of the Alps, nor the carp of the Rhine, nor the umber of the lake of Geneva. He wants none of theſe; nor I neither.

py. When the Spartan had gratified his wants, he entered the amphitheatre; and there, in the preſence of the old men, and the moſt beautiful women, he daily diſplayed the ſtrength, agility, and dexterity of his body, and at the ſame time evinced, by the vivacity of his replies, all the acuteneſs and preciſion of his judgment.

Now, of all occupations proper to fill up *the interval between a ſatisfied and a riſing want*, there are none more agreeable. The Lacedæmonians, therefore, without commerce and without money, were nearly as happy as a people could be. I conſequently aſſert, from the experience of Xenophon, that we may baniſh money from a ſtate, and ſtill preſerve its happineſs. To what cauſe, moreover, are we to refer the happineſs of the public, but to the virtue of the individuals? The countries in general moſt fortunate, are thoſe where the inhabitants are the moſt virtuous. Now, is it in thoſe countries where money is current, that ſuch inhabitants are to be found?

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the productive principles of virtue in thoſe countries where money is not current.

IN every government, the principle the moſt fruitful in virtue, is the exactitude in puniſhing or rewarding actions uſeful or detrimental to ſociety.

But in what countries are they moſt exactly honoured and puniſhed? In thoſe where glory, general eſteem, and the advantages attached to that eſteem, are the only known recompenſes. In thoſe countries, the nation is the ſole and juſt diſpenſer of rewards. The general eſteem, that gift of public acknowledgment, is granted only to ideas and actions uſeful to the nation, and every citizen in conſequence finds himſelf neceſſitated to be virtuous.

Is it ſo in countries where money is current? No: the public cannot be there the ſole poſſeſſor of riches, nor conſequently the only diſtributer of rewards. Whoever has money can give it, and will commonly give it to the perſon who procures him the moſt pleaſure. Now that perſon is not always the moſt worthy. In fact, if man would always obtain with the moſt ſecurity,

and the leaſt trouble poſſible, the object of his deſires (17), and that it be more facile to render himſelf agreeable to people in power, than to the public, it will then be the people in power he will pleaſe. Now, if the intereſt of thoſe in power be frequently oppoſite to that of the nation, the greateſt rewards will then be, in certain countries, decreed to actions, which though perſonally uſeful to the great, are detrimental to the public, and conſequently criminal. For this reaſon it is that riches are ſo often heaped on men, accuſed of baſeneſs, and intrigues, of being ſpies, &c. and that pecuniary rewards being almoſt always granted to vice (18), produce ſo many wicked men, and that money has been always regarded as a ſource of corruption.

I allow therefore that at the head of a new colony, if I would found an empire, and that I could at my pleaſure inflame my coloniſts with a paſſion either for glory or money, it ſhould be for glory. It ought to be by making the public eſteem, and the advantages ariſing from that eſteem, the active principles of theſe new coloniſts, that I ſhould compel them to be virtuous.

In a country where money is not current, nothing is more eaſy than to maintain order and harmony, to encourage talents and virtues, and baniſh vices. We perceive alſo the poſſibility in theſe countries of an unalterable legiſlation, which being ſuppoſed good, would always preſerve the people

people in the ſame ſtate of happineſs. This poſſibility becomes evaneſcent in countries where money is current.

Perhaps the problem of a perfect and durable legiſlation there becomes too complicate, to be yet reſolved. I can only ſay, that the love of money there ſtifling all ſpirit, every patriotic virtue, muſt at length engender all thoſe vices of which it is too often the reward.

But to allow that in a new colony we ought to oppoſe the introduction of money, is to allow, with the auſtere moraliſts, the danger of luxury? No: it is merely to allow that the cauſe of luxury, that is, the too unequal diſtribution of riches, is an evil (19). It is one in fact, and luxury is, in certain, reſpects, a remedy for this evil. At the inſtant of forming a ſociety one might, without doubt, propoſe to baniſh money. But can the ſtate of ſuch a ſociety be compared with that in which the greateſt part of the nations of Europe now are?

Could it be in countries half-ſubject to deſpotiſm, where money is already current, and riches collected in a few hands, that a diſcerning mind would form ſuch a project? Suppoſing however the project executed; that the introduction and uſe of money were forbid in a country, what would be the reſult? I ſhall now examine.

CHAP. XIV.

Of countries where money is current.

IF among a rich people there be many vicious, it is becauſe there are many rewards for vice. If there be a great commerce, it is becauſe money facilitates exchange. If luxury there diſplay itſelf in all its pomp, it is becauſe a very unequal partition of wealth produces the moſt apparent luxury, and that then to baniſh it from a ſtate, the money muſt, as I have already proved, be baniſhed with it. Now, no prince can conceive ſuch a deſign; and ſuppoſe he could conceive it, no nation, in the preſent ſtate of Europe, would comply with his deſires. We will ſuppoſe, however, that ſome monarch, the humble diſciple of an auſtere moraliſt, ſhould form and execute this project. What would be the conſequence? The almoſt entire depopulation of the ſtate. Suppoſe, for example, that in France, as at Sparta, the introduction of money, and the uſe of all furniture not made with the axe, ſhould be forbid. The maſon, the ſculpture, the coachmaker, the turner, the varniſher, the workers in fine woollen and linen, in lace, ſilk, &c.* muſt abandon France, and ſeek a country where they

* But on this ſuppoſition it will be ſaid, theſe workmen would return to the labour of the field, and became plowmen, woodmen,

could ſubſiſt. The number of theſe voluntary exiles would amount, perhaps, to one fourth of the inhabitants. Now if the number of huſbandmen and common artificers that are neceſſary for cultivating the land, be always in proportion to the number of conſumers, the exile of the fabricators of luxury, would draw after it many of the agricultors. The opulent flying with their riches to a foreign land, would be followed by a conſiderable number of their fellow-citizens, and by a great number of domeſtics. France would then be deſerted. What would be its inhabitants? Some agricultors, whoſe number, ſince the invention of the plough, is much leſs than when the land was cultivated by the ſpade. Now, in this ſtate of depopulation and indigence, what would become of this kingdom? Would it make war on its neighbours? No: it would be without money (20). Would it maintain its own territory? No: it would be without men. Beſide, France not being, like Switzerland, defended by inacceſſible mountains, how can it be imagined, that a kingdom depopulated, open on every ſide, expoſed to attacks in Flanders and Germany, could repel the ſhock of a numerous enemy? To be able to reſiſt, the French ſhould have, by their courage and diſcipline, the ſame

woodmen, &c. No ſuch matter. Beſide, where would they find employment in a country already furniſhed with a ſufficient number of men to till the ground, and cut the wood.

ſuperiority over their neighbours, that the Greeks formerly had over the Perſians, or that the French ſtill have over the Indians. But no one European nation has now that ſuperiority over others.

France, therefore, deſolated and deprived of its money, would be expoſed to the almoſt certain danger of an invaſion. Is there a prince who would on theſe conditions baniſh riches and luxury from his kingdom?

CHAP. XV.

Of the period at which riches retire of themſelves from an empire.

THERE is no country where riches are fixed, or ever can be fixed. Like the ſea, that by turns overflows and leaves bare different ſhores, riches, after having carried abundance and luxury among ſome countries, leaves them to diffuſe itſelf among others (21). They formerly abode for a time at Tyre and Sidon, paſſed from thence to Carthage, and then to Rome. They now ſojourn in England. Will they remain there? I know not. But this I know, that a nation enriched by its commerce and induſtry, will impoveriſh its neighbours, and at laſt make them unable to purchaſe its merchandize. That a nation rich in money, and in papers repreſentative of money, and gradually increaſing

in

in wealth, its proviſions and the labour of its artificers will grow continually dearer *. That all other things remaining the ſame †, an oppulent nation not being able to furniſh its proviſions and merchandize, at the price of a poor nation, the money of the former will inſenſibly paſs into the hands of the latter, who becoming opulent in turn, will ruin itſelf in like manner (22).

This, perhaps, is the principal cauſe of the flux and reflux of the riches of an empire. Now, riches, in retiring from a country where they have ſojourned, leave almoſt always behind them, the dung of baſeneſs and deſpotiſm. A rich nation that becomes poor, paſſes rapidly from decay to entire deſtruction. The only reſource left, is to reſume maſculine manners, which are alone compatible with its poverty (23). But nothing is more rare than this moral phenomenon. Hiſtory affords us no example of it. When a nation falls from wealth to indigence, it has nothing to expect but a conqueror and fetters. To deliver it from this evil, the love of glory muſt ſucceed to that of money. Now, a people that have been

* Labour becoming very dear in a rich nation, that nation draws more from another than it carries to it. It, therefore, ſooner or later, muſt impoveriſh itſelf.

† We know what a ſudden augmentation was made in the price of proviſions by the tranſportation of American gold into Europe.

a long

a long time poliſhed and commercial, are ſcarce ſuſceptible of a love of glory, and every law that damps their deſire of wealth haſtens their ruin.

In the political, as in the natural body, there muſt be a ſoul, an animating faculty that enlivens it and puts it in action. What muſt that be?

CHAP. XVI.

Of the ſeveral principles of action in nations.

ARE there any among men without deſires? Scarce any. Are their deſires the ſame? There are two of them common to all men.

The firſt is, that of happineſs.

The ſecond, that of a power neceſſary to procure happineſs.

Have I a taſte? I would have the power to gratify it. The deſire of power, as I have already proved, is therefore neceſſarily common to all. But by what means can a man acquire power over his fellow-citizens? By the fear he excites in them, and by the love with which he inſpires them; that is to ſay, by the good and the harm he can do them: and from hence the reſpect we have for the ſtrong, whether virtuous or wicked.

But in a free country, where money is not current, what advantage can this reſpect procure a hero, who for example, has contributed the moſt

to

to gain a battle? It will give him the choice of the ſpoils from the enemy: the moſt beautiful ſlave, the fineſt horſe, the richeſt tapeſtry, the moſt ſumptuous chariot, the moſt brilliant armour (24). In a free nation, public eſteem and reſpect * is a power, and the deſire of that eſteem there becomes in conſequence a potent principle of action. But is this moving principle that of a people ſubject to deſpotiſm, of a people where money is current; where the public are without power; where its eſteem is not the repreſentative of any ſort of pleaſure or authority? No: in ſuch a country, the two only objects of the citizens deſire are, the favour of the deſpot, and great riches; to the poſſeſſion of which every one may aſpire.

Their ſource, it will be ſaid, is often infected. The love of money is deſtructive to the love of our country, of talents, and of virtue (25). I know it: but how can it be imagined, that men ſhould deſpiſe money, which ſuccours them in diſtreſs, relieves them from pains, and procures them pleaſures. There are countries where the love of money becomes the principle of national activity, and where this love is conſequently ſalutary. The worſt of all governments, is that where there is no principle of action (26). A peo-

* This eſteem is really a power, which the ancients expreſſed by the word *authoritas*.

ple

ple without desires, are without action, and despised by their neighbours; now their esteem is of more importance to the prosperity of a nation than is commonly imagined (27).

In every kingdom where money is current, and merit does not lead to honours or power, let the magistrate take good heed how he damps or extinguishes in the people the love of money and of luxury. He will stifle in them all principle of action.

CHAP. XVII.

Of money, considered as one of the principles of action.

MONEY, and papers representative of money, facilitate loans. All governments abuse this facility. Loans are every where multiplied: their interests are augmented. To discharge them, taxes are heaped on taxes. Their burden now overloads the most powerful empires of Europe, and yet this evil is not the greatest that the love of money and its representative papers have produced.

The love of riches does not extend to every class of citizens, without inspiring the governing party with a desire of rapine and oppression (28).

From hence the construction of a port, an equipment, a company of commerce, the undertaking of a war, is pretended to be for the honour of the

the nation; in ſhort, every pretence to plunder is greedily ſeized. Then all the vices produced by avidity, making way at once into an empire, ſucceſſively infect all its members, and at laſt hurry it into ruin. What ſpecific remedy is there for this evil? None.

The blood that carries nutrition to all the members of a child, and ſucceſſively enlarges every part, is a principle of deſtruction. The ſame circulation of the blood at laſt oſſifies the veſſels, deſtroys their ſprings and produces the ſeeds of death. Yet he that ſhould ſuſpend this circulation would be immediately puniſhed. A ſtagnation for an inſtant would be a privation of life. It is ſo with money. Is it earneſtly deſired? That deſire animates a nation, rouſes its induſtry, enlivens its commerce, increaſes its riches and power; and the ſtagnation, if I may ſo ſay, of that deſire, would be mortal to certain ſtates.

But do not riches, by forſaking thoſe nations where they were firſt accumulated, occaſion their ruin; and by being collected, ſooner or later, into a ſmall number of hands, detach them by a private intereſt from that of the public? Yes, without doubt. But in the preſent forms of government, this evil is perhaps inevitable. Perhaps it is at that epoch a nation by growing daily more enfeebled, falls into that decadence, which is the precurſor of its entire deſtruction; and perhaps

perhaps it is thus that the moral plant, called an empire, naturally ſhoots up, increaſes, grows vigorous, and expires.

CHAP. XVIII.

That it is not in luxury, but in its productive cauſe, that we ought to ſeek for the deſtructive principle of great empires.

WHAT can we conclude, from this haſty examen of the queſtion I here treat? That almoſt all the accuſations brought againſt luxury are groundleſs; that of the two ſpecies of luxury, mentioned in chap. v. one of them being always the effect of the too great increaſe of inhabitants, and of the deſpotic form of their governments, ſuppoſes a very unequal diſtribution of the national wealth; that ſuch diſtribution is doubtleſs a great evil; but that luxury when once eſtabliſhed, becomes, if not an efficacious remedy, at leaſt a palliative for this evil (29). It is the magnificence of the great, that daily brings back money and activity to the inferior claſs of citizens.

The rage with which moſt moraliſts inveigh againſt luxury, is the effect of their ignorance. Let this rage be confined to a ſermon, for that requires no preciſion of ideas. Works of that ſort,

ſort, applauded by a timorous and benevolent old man, are too vague, too enthuſiaſtic, and too ridiculous to gain the eſteem of an enlightened auditory.

What good ſenſe examines, the ignorance of the preacher peremptorily determines. His ſuperficial and confident underſtanding never knows how to doubt. Unhappy would be the prince who aſſented to ſuch declamations, and who, without previous changes in government, attempted to baniſh all luxury from a nation, where the love of money is the principle of action. He would ſoon depopulate his country, enervate the induſtry of his ſubjects, and throw their minds into a languor that would be fatal to his power.

I ſhall be content if theſe firſt, and perhaps ſuperficial ideas, that ariſe from a conſideration of the queſtion concerning luxury, be regarded as an inſtance of the different points of view from which we ought to conſider every important and complicated problem in morality (30). If from hence is perceived all the influence that a ſolution, more or leſs accurate, of ſimilar problems has on the public happineſs, and conſequently the ſcrupulous attention with which ſuch examen ſhould be made.

Whoever declares himſelf the fautor of ignorance, declares himſelf an enemy of the ſtate, and,

and, without knowing it, commits treaſon againſt humanity.

Among all nations, there is a reciprocal dependence between the perfection of legiſlation, and the progreſs of the human underſtanding. The more intelligent the citizens are, the more perfect their laws will be. Now, it is on their goodneſs alone, as I am going to prove, that the public felicity depends.

NOTES.

NOTES.

1. (page 72.) THE averſion of an ignorant people to application extends even to their amuſements. If they love gaming, it is at games of chance alone they play. If they are fond of an opera, it is poems without words, ſo to ſay, they require. It is of little conſequence to them whether their minds be employed, if their ears be but ſtruck with agreeable ſounds. Among all their pleaſures, thoſe are preferred that require neither knowledge nor judgment.

2. (p. 77.) Why are great men, in England, more intelligent in general than elſewhere? Becauſe they have an intereſt ſo to be. In Portugal, on the contrary, why are they ſo frequently ignorant and ſtupid? Becauſe no intereſt urges them to inſtruction.

The ſcience of the firſt of theſe, is that of man and of government.

That of the ſecond, is the ſcience of levees, couchees, and journies of their monarch.

But have they, in England, thrown all thoſe lights on politics and morality, that might be expected from ſo free a people? I doubt it. Intoxicated with their glory, the Engliſh do not ſuſpect any defect in their preſent form of government. Perhaps the French writers have, on this ſubject, views more profound and more extenſive. There are two cauſes for this effect.

The firſt is the ſtate of France. Before the misfortunes of a country are exceſſive, and have entirely broke the ſpirits of the people, they quicken their perception, and become a principle of activity in them. When a people ſuffer, they would throw off their calamities; and that deſire produces an inventive faculty.

The ſecond is, perhaps, the little liberty the French writers enjoy. When the man in place commits an overſight, or act of injuſtice, it muſt be treated with reſpect. Of all crimes in that kingdom, the moſt ſeverely puniſhed is complaint.

When a man would there write on the affairs of adminiſtration, he muſt remount in morality and politics, to thoſe ſimple and general principles, whoſe development will indicate, in a concealed manner, the route that government ought to take. The French writers have the moſt grand and extenſive ideas of this kind *, they have therefore rendered themſelves more univerſally uſeful than the Engliſh; who, not having the ſame motives to elevate themſelves to firſt and general principles, compoſe good works, but almoſt ſolely applicable to their particular form of government, and their particular circumſtances; in a word, to the affairs of the preſent day.

3. (p. 77.) There is, at London, no labourer or porter, who does not read the newſpapers, and ſuſpect the venality of his repreſentatives; and does not think in conſequence, that he ought to inſtruct himſelf in his rights, in quality of a citizen. So that no member of parliament dare to propoſe a law contrary to the liberty of the nation. If he ſhould do it, he would be cited by the party in oppoſition, and the public papers, before the people, and would be expoſed to their vengance. The body of the parliament is therefore controled by the nation. No arm is now ſufficiently ſtrong to enchain ſuch a people. Their ſubjection is therefore far off. Is it impoſſible? I will not maintain that. Perhaps their preſent immenſe riches preſage that future event.

4. (p. 79.) The laſt king of Denmark certainly doubted the legitimacy of a deſpotic power, when he permitted celebrated writers to controvert his rights and pretenſions, and to examine what limits the public intereſt ought to ſet to his power. What magnanimity in a ſovereign! Was his future authority thereby enfeebled? No; and this conduct, that rendered him dear to his people, ought to make him for ever reſpectable to humanity.

5. (p. 82.) In the heroic ages, as thoſe of Hercules, Theſeus, Fingal, &c. it was by the gift of a gorgeous quiver, a well-tempered ſword, or a beautiful ſlave, that the virtues of a warrior were recompenſed. In the time of Manlius Capi-

* *This is evidently the deſign of a late French Treatiſe, entitled,* '*L'An deux mille quatre cent quarente,*' *and publiſhed in England, under the title of* "*Memoirs of the Year Two thouſand* "*five hundred.*"

tolinus

tolinus, it was by the addition of two acres of territory, that his country discharged its obligations to a hero. The tenth of a parish that is now granted to the vilest among the monks, would have then recompensed a Scævola, or an Horatius Cocles. If, in these days, all service rendered to our country be paid in money, it is because money is the representative of those ancient gifts. The love of superfluities has been, in all times the motive and principle of man. But in what manner the gifts of public acknowledgment should be administered, and what sort of superfluities should be preferred as a recompence for talents and virtue, is a moral problem equally worthy the attention of the minister and the philosopher.

6. (p. 84.) When great riches are diffused among a great number of citizens, each of them live in a state of ease, and of luxury too, when compared with the citizens of another nation, and yet have but little money to lay out in what is called magnificence.

Among such a people, luxury is, if I may so say, national, but little apparent.

On the contrary, where all the money is collected into a few hands, each of these have large sums to lay out in sumptuosity.

Such a luxury supposes a very unequal partition of the national wealth; and that partition is doubtless a public calamity. Is it the same with that national luxury which supposes all the inhabitants in a certain state of ease, and consequently a nearly equal partition of the same riches? No; this luxury, far from being a misfortune, is a public good. Luxury, therefore, is not in itself an evil.

7. (ibid.) One may, by the number, and especially by the sort of manufactures of a country, judge in what manner its riches are distributed. Are all the people there in easy circumstances? All would be well cloathed. There are consequently established a great number of manufactories of stuffs, of a common quality. They are well made, solid and durable; for the inhabitants are provided with money enough to clothe themselves, but not frequently to change their dress.

Are the riches of the country collected, on the contrary, into a few hands? The greatest part of the people must languish in misery. Now the indigent, not being able to purchase cloaths, many of the manufactures just mentioned, must

ſink. What will be ſubſtituted in their room? Some manufactures of ſtuffs, rich and brilliant, but not durable; for opulence, aſhamed to wear out a habit, would change it often. Thus in a government all things depend on each other.

8. (p. 85.) When I ſee, ſaid a great king, delicacy and profuſion on the table of the rich and great, I ſuſpect a ſcarcity among the people. Now, I like to know, that my people are well fed, and well cloathed; I would not tolerate poverty but at the head of my regiments. Poverty is brave, active, vigilant; for it is covetous of riches, and will purſue them through the greateſt dangers: and becauſe man is more reſolute in conquering, than in preſerving, and the thief more courageous than the merchant; the latter is more opulent, and better knows the worth of riches; the thief always exaggerates their value.

9. (p. 86.) Great Britain is of a ſmall extent, yet is reſpected by all Europe. What better proof can be given of its wiſe adminiſtration, and of the proſperity and courage of its people, in ſhort, of that national happineſs legiſlators and philoſophers propoſe to procure mankind? The firſt by their laws, and the laſt by their writings.

10. (p. 94.) The expence or conſumption of men, occaſioned by commerce, navigation, and the exerciſe of certain trades, is, they ſay, very conſiderable. So much the better. It is neceſſary for the tranquility of a very populous country, that the expence of this ſort, ſhould be, if I may venture the expreſſion, equal to the income; or that the ſtate, as in Switzerland, conſume the ſurplus of its inhabitants, in the wars of ſtrangers *.

* *This appears to be wretched policy. Mankind are in a miſerable ſtate indeed, if they be obliged to murder themſelves, or be murdered by others, to avoid being too populous. How few countries of Europe are there, that would not nouriſh many times the number of their preſent inhabitants, if the land were cultivated in the manner ſome countries are? Beſides, how many millions of acres are there in America, and other parts of the earth, which, by their luxuriance, ſeem to court the ſluggiſh hand of man, and to which* the ſuperfluous inhabitants *(a very vague term) might emigrate in large bodies, and where they might enjoy the ſame form of government, and the ſame liberty, as in their native country?*

11. (p.

11. (p. 95.) It has been ſaid, that luxury augments the induſtry of the huſbandman; and it was truly ſaid. If he deſire to make frequent exchanges, he will be obliged to improve his land, and augment his harveſt.

12. (p. 106.) Of the amount of taxes impoſed on the people, one part is deſtined to the ſupport and amuſement of the ſovereign; but the other ought to be applied ſolely to the neceſſities of the ſtate. If the prince be proprietor of the firſt part, he is but adminiſtrator of the ſecond. He may be liberal of the one, he ought to be frugal of the other.

The public treaſure is a pledge in the hands of the ſovereign. The greedy courtier, I know, gives the name of generoſity to the diſſipation of this truſt; but the prince, by whom it is violated, commits an injuſtice, and a real robbery. The duty of a monarch, is to be parſimonious of the property of his ſubjects. "I ſhould think myſelf unworthy of "the throne, ſaid a great prince, if, as depoſitary of the re-"ceipts of the taxes, I ſhould diſſipate a ſingle penſion, to en-"rich a favorite, or informer"

The legitimate employment of all taxes raiſed for the maintenance of the ſtate, is the payment of troops for the repelling a war from a kingdom, and the payment of magiſtrates for the maintenance of peace and order within the kingdom.

Tiberius, himſelf, frequently repeated to his favorites, "I "ſhall take great care how I touch the public treaſure. If I "ſhould exhauſt it in fooliſh expences, I muſt refill it; and "if, for that purpoſe, I have recourſe to unjuſt means, it "will ſhake my throne."

13. (p. 107.) How are we to diſtinguiſh the luxury that is really detrimental? By the ſort of merchandiſe expoſed in the ſhops: the richer thoſe articles are, the more diſproportion there is among the fortunes of the citizens. Now this great diſproportion, always an evil in itſelf, becomes a much greater evil by the multiplicity of taſtes it produces. Theſe taſtes, contracted, will be gratified. To effect this, immenſe treaſures are neceſſary. There are then no bounds to the deſire of riches; nothing that men will not do, to attain them. Virtue, honor, their country, all are ſacrificed, to the love of money.

In the country, on the contrary, were men are content with what is neceſſary, they may be at once happy and virtuous.

Exceſſive luxury, which is almoſt every where attended by deſpotiſm, ſuppoſes a nation to be already divided between oppreſſors and oppreſſed, robbers and robbed. But if the robbers be the ſmalleſt number, why are they nor cruſhed by the efforts of the majority? To what do they owe their ſecurity? To the impoſſibility the robbed find in giving the word, and of all aſſembling on the ſame day. Beſide, the oppreſſor, with the money he has already plundered, can levy an army to attack the oppreſſed, and conquer them in detached parties. Thus the plundering of a nation, ſubject to deſpotiſm, continues, till at laſt depopulation, and the miſery of the people, have made them both, oppreſſors and oppreſſed, ſubject to the yoke of a neighbouring power. A nation, in that ſtate, is compoſed of none but indigents without courage, and robbers without juſtice. It is debaſed, and deſtitute of virtue.

It is not ſo in a country were riches, being in a manner equally divided among the inhabitants, they are all in a ſtate of competency, when compared with the people of other countries. In this country, no man is rich enough to enſlave his compatriots. Each one, reſtrained by his neighbour, is more ſolicitous to preſerve than uſurp. The deſire of conſervation there becomes the general and dominant deſire of the largeſt and richeſt part of the nation. Now, it is this deſire, and the ſtate of eaſe among the inhabitants, together with a reſpect for the property of others, that, in every people, fecundates the ſeeds of virtue, juſtice, and happineſs. It is, therefore, to the cauſe of a certain luxury, that we ſhould refer almoſt all the calamities that are imputed to luxury itſelf.

14. (p. 107.) The courtiers, they ſay, model themſelves after their prince. If, therefore, he deſpiſe luxury and effeminacy, will they not diſappear? Yes, for a moment. But to produce a durable change in the manners of a people, neither the example, nor the ordinance of a ſovereign, are ſufficient. His commands will not change a nation of Sybarites, into a robuſt, laborious, and valiant people. That muſt be the work of the laws. Let the people be every day compelled, for ſome hours, to labour, and every day expoſed to ſome little danger, and they will, at length, become robuſt and brave: for ſtrength

and

and courage, ſay the king of Pruſſia and Vegetius, are acquired by a habit of labour and danger.

15. (p. 108.) In a free country, the collection of the natural wealth into a few hands, is made ſlowly; it is the work of ages; but, in proportion as it is made, the government tends to an arbitrary power, and conſequently to its diſſolution.

The republican ſtate is the virile age of an empire; deſpotiſm is its old age. When an empire once becomes old, it ſeldom rejuvenates. Have the rich got a part of the nation in their pay? With that part, they will ſubject the reſt to deſpotiſm, ariſtocracy, or monarchy. When any new laws are propoſed in that empire, they are all in favour of the rich and great, none in favour of the people. The ſpirit of legiſlation corrupts, and that corruption announces the fall of the ſtate.

16. (p. 110) Nothing is more contradictory than the opinions of the moraliſts, on this ſubject. When they agree on the utility and neceſſity of commerce, in certain countries, they would, at the ſame time, introduce an auſterity of manners, totally incompatible with the ſpirit of commerce.

In France, the moraliſt, who in the morning recommends to the government the care of rich manufactures, declaims in the evening, againſt luxury, public exhibitions, and the manners of the capital.

But, what is the object of government, when it improves theſe manufactures, and extends its commerce? To attract the wealth of its neighbours. Now, who doubts, that the manners and amuſements of the capital do not concur in the ſame effect? That the theatres, and actreſſes, the expences they make, and cauſe ſtrangers to make, are not one of the moſt lucrative parts of the commerce of Paris? What then, ye moraliſts, is the object of your contradictory declamations?

17. (p. 116.) No one ſhould wonder at the extreme love of man for money. His indifference for riches, would be a phenomenon truly ſurpriſing. In every country, where riches are exchanged for every ſort of pleaſure, they muſt neceſſarily be as eagerly purſued, as the pleaſures themſelves. To extinguiſh among a people the love of riches, would require the birth of a Lycurgus, and the prohibition of money. Now what a remarkable concurrence of circumſtances are requiſite

to the forming of such a legislator, and a people proper to receive his laws.

18 (p. 116.) From the moment honours are no longer the reward of honest actions, the manners become corrupt, On the the arrival of the duke of Milan at Florence, contempt, says Machiavel, was the portion of virtue and talents. The Florentines, without discernment and without courage, were entirely degenerate. If they sought to surpass each other, it was in the magnificence of dress and in vivacity of repartees. The most satiric was with them the most witty. Is there, at this time, a nation in Europe, whose present turn of mind resembles that of the Florentines, at the time just mentioned? *Does not the author, by this question, mean to refer to the French nation?*

19. (p. 117.) It is not on the greater or less quantity of national riches, but on their more or less equal distribution, that the happiness or misery of a people depends. Suppose half the riches of a nation were to be anihilated, and the other half to be divided among the people in a manner nearly equal, the state would be almost equally happy, and powerful. *This must be understood of the internal police of the nation, and in time of peace only.*

Of all commerce, that whose profits are divided into a great number of hands, is the most advantageous to every nation. The more subjects there are in a nation, who are free, independent, and enjoy a mediocrity, the more powerful that nation is. For this reason, no wise prince will load his people with taxes, nor deprive them of their ease, nor abridge their liberty, either by a great number of informers, or by regulations in the police that are too severe or too incommodious. A monarch who does not regard the ease and liberty of his subjects, will see their depressed spirits languish in torpitude. Now this malady of the mind is so much the more distressful, as it is, for the most part, already incurable, before it is perceived.

20. (p. 119.) If the introduction of money be forbid in a state, it must either adopt the laws of Sparta, or be exposed to the invasion of its neighbours. How can it long resist, if being always liable to their attacks, it cannot attack them in turn.

In every state, to repel war, now so expensive, it is necessary that a people have either great riches, or, with their poverty, the courage and discipline of the Spartans.

Now

Now, what provides a government with great riches? Great taxes, levied on the ſuperfluities, and not on the wants of the people. What do great taxes ſuppoſe? Large conſumptions. If the Engliſh lived like the Spaniards, on bread, water, and onions, England would ſoon be impoveriſhed; and being incapable of maintaining fleets and armies, would be no longer reſpected. Its preſent power, founded on its immenſe revenues, would be ſoon deſtroyed, if its taxes, as I have juſt ſaid, were levied on the neceſſaries, and not on the conveniencies of the inhabitants.

The moſt habitual crime of European governments, is their avidity, in appropriating all the money of the people. Their thirſt is inſatiable. What follows? That the ſubjects, diſguſted with their conveniencies, from the great difficulty they find in procuring them, are without emulation, and without ſhame of their poverty. From that moment the conſumption diminiſhes, the lands remain uncultivated, and the people are plunged in idleneſs and indigence: for the love of riches has for its baſis,

1. The poſſibility of acquiring them.
2. The aſſurance of preſerving them.
3. The right of uſing them.

21. (p. 120.) Suppoſe that Great Britain were to attack India, deſpoil it of its treaſures, and tranſport them to London. The Engliſh would then be in poſſeſſion of immenſe riches. What would be the conſequence? They would firſt exhauſt England of all that could contribute to their pleaſures; and then draw from ſtrangers the moſt exquiſite wines, oils, coffee, &c. in ſhort, all that could flatter their taſte; and all nations would partake of the Indian treaſures. I doubt whether any ſumptuary laws could prevent this diſperſion of their wealth. Theſe laws, always eaſy to be eluded, are beſide too invaſive of the right of property, the firſt and moſt ſacred of all rights. But, what means are there to fix the riches of an empire? I know of none. The flux and reflux of money are in morals the effects of cauſes as conſtant, neceſſary, and powerful, as in phyſics, the flux and reflux of the ſea

22. (p. 121.) Nothing is more eaſy than to trace the ſeveral progreſſions by which a nation paſſes from poverty to riches; from the poſſeſſion, to the unequal partition of riches; from that unequal partition to deſpotiſm, and from deſpotiſm to ruin.

ruin. A man, when poor, applies himſelf to commerce or agriculture, and makes a fortune. He is imitated by others, who in like manner grow rich. Their number increaſes, and the whole nation inſenſibly finds itſelf animated with a ſpirit of labour and gain. Its induſtry is thus roufed, its commerce extends, and it every day increaſes in riches and power. But if its riches and power are inſenſibly collected into a few hands, then a taſte for luxury and ſuperfluities will poſſeſs the great; for riches are not acquired, if we except a few miſers, but to be expended. The love of ſuperfluities will excite in the great a thirſt for gold, and a deſire of power; they would command like tyrants over their fellow-citizens. They will attempt all things for this purpoſe, and it will be then that arbitrary power, introducing itſelf to the people in the train of riches, will by degrees corrupt their manners, and degrade their character.

When a commercial nation attains the period of its grandeur, the ſame deſire of gain that produced at firſt its ſtrength, and its power, will thus become the cauſe of its ruin.

The principle of life, that diſplays itſelf in a majeſtic oak, elevates its trunk, extends its branches, and makes it the monarch of the foreſt, is alſo the principle of its diſſolution.

But may not the duration of empires be prolonged, by ſuſpending in the people the too rapid progreſs of this deſire of gold? I reply, the love of riches may be weakened in the citizens, but who can be ſure that they will not then fall into that Spaniſh indolence, which is the moſt incurable of all political maladies?

23. (p. 121.) The virtues of poverty are, in a nation, boldneſs, intrepidity, ſincerity, and conſtancy: in ſhort, a ſort of noble ferocity. They are, among a riſing people, the effect of that ſort of equality, which reigns at firſt among all the citizens. But do theſe virtues remain a long time in an empire? No: they ſeldom grow old there; the mere increaſe of inhabitants is frequently ſufficient to baniſh them.

24. (p. 123.) There are no talents or virtues that the hope of honours ariſing from the public eſteem and acknowledgement, will not create in a people. Nothing that the deſire of obtaining them will not excite men to undertake. Honours

are

are a coin, whose value rises or falls according to the greater or less equity with which they are distributed. The public interest requires that they should preserve the same value, and be dispensed with as much equity as œconomy. Every wise people should requite the services done them by honours. If they acquit them in money, they will soon exhaust their treasure, and being then unable to recompense talents and virtue, they will be both stifled in their birth.

25. (p. 123.) When money becomes the sole principle of activity in a nation, it is an evil, for which I know no remedy. Rewards in property would doubtless be more favourable to the production of virtuous men: but before they could be established, what changes must be made in the governments of most nations of Europe?

26. (p. 123.) To what cause is the extreme power of England to be attributed? To the motion, the play of all the opposite passions. The party in opposition, excited by ambition, vengeance, or a love of their country, there protect the people from tyranny. The court party, animated by the desire of places or bribes, there sustain the minister, against the sometimes unjust attacks of opposition.

The restless avidity of a commercial people, keeps the industry of the artisan continually awake, and by that industry the riches of almost all the universe are transported into England. But in a nation so rich and powerful, how can they flatter themselves that the several parts will always remain in that equilibrium of force, which now secures its repose and grandeur? That equilibrium is perhaps very difficult to maintain. The epitaph of a duke of Devonshire, may be hitherto applied to the English: *A faithful subject to good kings, a redoubtable enemy to tyrants.* Will that application always be made? Happy the nation of whom M. Gourville could say. *Their king, when he is the man of his people, is the greatest king in the world; but when he would be more, he is nothing.* This saying, repeated by Sir William Temple, to Charles II. at first hurt that monarch's pride; but coming to himself, he took Temple by the hand, and said, *Gourville is right, and I will be the man of my people.*

27. (p. 124.) It is a Jewish spirit in the mother-country, that frequently carries the fire of revolt into its colonies. When the colonists are treated like negroes, they become irritated, and

if

if they be numerous they reſiſt, and at laſt ſeparate themſelves, as the ripe fruit ſeparates from the branch.

To ſecure the love and ſubmiſſion of the colonies, a nation ſhould be juſt. It ſhould frequently remember, that it ſent to thoſe diſtant lands ſuch ſuperfluous people only, as were a charge to itſelf, and that conſequently it has no right to require any thing from them, but ſuccours in time of war, and the obſervance of a federative treaty, to which the colonies will always ſubmit, when the mother-country does not attempt to appropriate all the profits of their labours.

28. (p. 124.) In every country where money is current, its unequal diſtribution muſt at length produce a general poverty; and that kind of poverty is the mother of depopulation. Indigence has little concern for her children, affords them little nouriſhment, and brings up but few. As a proof of this, I cite the ſavages of North America, and the ſlaves of the colonies. The exceſſive labour required of the breeding negroes, and the little care taken of them, together with the tyranny of their maſters, all concur to their ſterility.

If in America, the production of negroes be nearly equal to their conſumption among thoſe of the Jeſuits only, it is becauſe they, being better inſtructed, take more care of their ſlaves, and treat them with leſs barbarity.

When a prince maletreats his ſubjects, and loads them with taxes, he depopulates his country, and deſtroys the activity of his people; for extreme miſery neceſſarily produces diſcouragement, and diſcouragement idleneſs.

29. (p. 126.) A too unequal partition of the national wealth precedes, and always produces a taſte for luxury. When an individual has more money than is neceſſary for his wants, he gives himſelf up to the deſire of ſuperfluities. The enemy of luxury, therefore, ought to ſeek in the cauſe itſelf of the too unequal partition of riches; and in the deſtruction of deſpotiſm, the remedy for thoſe evils of which he accuſes luxury, and which luxury in reality helps to ſuppreſs. Every kind of ſuperfluity has its productive cauſe.

A luxury in horſes, in preference to jewels, eſpecially among the Engliſh, is in part the effect of the long reſidence they make in the country. If they all reſide there, it is becauſe they are, ſo to ſay, obliged to it by the conſtitution of

their

their government. (*I ſuppoſe the author means, that they are obliged to viſit their conſtituents, which however is not often the caſe.*)

It is the form of government that directs, in an inviſible manner, even the taſtes of individuals. It is always to their laws the people owe their manners and their cuſtoms.

30. (p. 127.) We cannot be too ſcrupulous in examining every important queſtion in morality and politics. It is, if I may ſo ſay, at the bottom of this examen, that ſcience and truth are found. The gold is found at the bottom of the crucible.

SECTION

SECTION VII.

The virtues and happineſs of a people are not the effects of the ſanctity of their religion, but of the ſagacity of their laws.

CHAP. I.

Of the ſmall influence religions have on the virtues and felicity of a people.

MEN, of more piety than knowledge, have imagined that the virtues of a nation, its humanity and the refinements of its manners, depend on the purity of its worſhip. The hypocrites, intereſted in propagating this opinion, have publiſhed without believing it; and the common part of mankind have believed it without examination.

This error once aſſerted, has been almoſt every where received as a certain truth. Experience and hiſtory teaches us however, that the proſperity of a people does not depend on the purity of their worſhip, but on the excellence of their legiſlation.

Of what importance, in fact, is their belief? That of the Jews was pure, and the Jews were the dregs of nations: they have never been compared

pared either to the Egyptians, or the ancient Perſians.

It was under Conſtantine that Chriſtianity became the ruling religion. It did not however reſtore the Romans to their primitive virtues. There was not then ſeen a Decius, who devoted himſelf for the good of his country; or a Fabricias, who preferred ſeven acres of land to all the riches of the empire.

At what period did Conſtantinople become the ſink of all the vices? At the very time the Chriſtian religion was eſtabliſhed. Its worſhip did not change the manners of the ſovereigns; their piety did not make them better. The Moſt Chriſtian kings have not been the greateſt of monarchs. Few of them have diſplayed on the throne the virtues of Titus, Trajan, or Antoninus. What pious prince can be compared to them?

What I have ſaid of monarchs, I ſay of nations. The pious Portugueſe, ſo ignorant and credulous, are not more virtuous or more humane than the leſs credulous and more tolerant Engliſh.

Religious intolerance is the daughter of ſacerdotal ambition and ſtupid credulity. It never makes men better. To have recourſe to ſuperſtition, credulity, and fanaticiſm, to inſpire men with beneficence, is to through oil into a fire in order to extinguiſh it.

To

To diminiſh the ferocity of mankind, and make them more ſocial, they muſt be firſt rendered indifferent to the various forms of worſhip. Had the Spaniards been leſs ſuperſtitious, they would have been leſs barbarous to the Americans.

Let us refer to king James. That prince was a bigot, and a connoiſſeur in theſe matters. He did not believe in the humanity of prieſts; "It "is very difficult, ſays he, to be once a good "theologian and a good ſubject."

There are, in every country, a great many ſound believers, and but few virtuous men. Why? Becauſe religion is not virtue. All belief, and all ſpeculative opinons, have not commonly any influence on the conduct (1) and probity of man *.

The dogma of fatality, is almoſt the general opinion of the Eaſt: it was that of the Stoics. What they call liberty, or a power to deliberate, is, they ſay, nothing more in man, than a ſucceſſive ſenſation of fear, or hope, when he is to undertake ſomething on which his happineſs or miſery depends. Deliberation is therefore always in us a neceſſary effect of our hatred for pain, and love of pleaſure (2). On this ſubject, conſult the theologians. Such a dogma, they will ſay, is deſtructive of all virtue. The Stoics

* A celebrated author, in ſhewing the inutility of papiſtical preachments, has fully proved the inutility of that religion.

however,

however, were not leſs virtuous than the philoſophers of other ſects: nor are the Mahometan princes leſs faithful to their treaties than the Catholic; nor the fataliſt Perſian leſs honeſt in his commerce than the French or Portugueſe Chriſtian. Purity of manners is, therefore, independent of purity of doctrines.

The Pagan religion, with regard to its morality, was founded, like every other, on what they call the law of nature. With regard to its theologic, or mythologic part, it was not very edifying. We cannot read the hiſtory of Jupiter and his loves, and eſpecially the treatment of his father Saturn, without allowing, that the Gods did not preach virtue by example. Yet Greece, and ancient Rome, abounded in heroes and virtuous citizens; while modern Greece, and new Rome, produce, like Brazil and Mexico, none but vile, ſlothful wretches, without talents, virtue, or induſtry.

Now, if ſince the eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity in the monarchies of Europe, the ſovereigns have not been either more valiant or intelligent; if the people have not had more knowledge or humanity: if the number of patriots has not been in any degree augmented; of what uſe then are religions? Under what pretence does the magiſtrate torment the unbeliever (3), and cut the throat of the heretic (4)? Why place ſo much importance in the belief of certain revelations,

that are always conteſted, and frequently ſo conteſtable; and pay ſo little regard to the morality of human actions?

What does the hiſtory of religions teach us? That they have every where lighted up the torch of intolerance, ſtrewed the plains with carcaſes, embrued the fields with blood, burned cities, and laid waſte empires; but that they have never made men better. Their goodneſs is the work of the laws (5).

It is the banks that contain the torrent: it is the pier of puniſhment and contempt, that reſtrains vice; and it is for the magiſtrate to erect that pier.

If morality, politics, and legiſlation, are but one and the ſame ſcience, who ought to be the true doctors of morality? The prieſts? No; the magiſtrates. Religion regulates our belief, and the laws our manners and our virtues.

What is it diſtinguiſhes the Chriſtian from the Jew, the Gueber and the Muſſulman? Is it an equity, a courage, a humanity, a beneficence, particular to one and not known to the others? No; they are known by their ſeveral profeſſions of faith: let not, therefore, honeſty be ever confounded with orthodoxy (6).

In every country, the orthodox is he that believes ſuch particular dogmas; and throughout the whole earth, the virtuous man, is he that does ſuch actions as are humane, and conformable

able to the general intereſt. Now, if it be the laws (7) that determine our actions, it is they that make us good citizens (8).

It is not, therefore, by the ſanctity of their worſhip, that we ought to judge of a people's virtue, and purity of manners. Shall we carry this inquiry further? We ſhall ſee, that a religious ſpirit is entirely deſtructive of the ſpirit of legiſlation.

CHAP. II.

That a religious ſpirit is deſtructive of the ſpirit of legiſlation.

OBEDIENCE to the laws is the foundation of all legiſlation. Obedience to the prieſt is the foundation of almoſt all religion.

If the intereſt of the prieſt could coaleſce with that of the nation, religions might become the ſupporters of every wiſe and humane law. This ſuppoſition is inadmiſſible. The intereſt of the eccleſiaſtical body has been every where diſtinct from that of the public, and confined within itſelf. The ſacerdotal government, from that of the Jews to that of the Pope, has conſtantly debaſed the nation where it has been eſtabliſhed. The clergy would be every where independent of the magiſtracy, and in conſequence there has

been in almoſt all nations two authorities, both ſupreme and deſtructive of each other.

An idle body is ambitious; it would be rich and powerful, and cannot become ſo but by depriving the magiſtrates of their authority *, and the people of their property.

The prieſts, to appropriate theſe, found their religion on a revelation, and declare themſelves the interpreters of that revelation. When any one is the interpreter of a law, he changes it at his pleaſure, and at length becomes the author of it. From the time the prieſts charged themſelves with announcing the decrees of heaven, they were no longer men, but divinities. It is in them, and not in God, that men believe. They can in his name command the violation of every law contrary to their intereſt, and the deſtruction of every authority that rebels againſt their deciſions.

A religious ſpirit has, for this reaſon, been conſtantly incompatible with a legiſlative † ſpirit,

* At the time of the projected deſtruction of the parliaments of France, what indecent joy did not the prieſts of Paris diſcover! Let the magiſtrates of every nation ſee, in that joy, the hatred the ſpiritual power bears the temporal. If prieſthood ſometimes appear to reſpect a king, it is when he is brought into ſubjection by them, and by him they command the laws.

† Does the intereſt of the prieſt change? His religious principles change alſo. How often have the interpreters of revelation metamorphoſed virtue into vice, and vice into virtue? They have beatified the aſſaſſin of a king. With what confidence,

and the prieſt always the enemy of the magiſtrate. The firſt inſtituted the canonical laws, and the other the political laws. The ſpirit of domination and falſhood preſided at the conſtruction of the firſt, and they have been fatal to the univerſe. The ſpirit of juſtice and truth preſided, more or leſs, at the conſtruction of the other; and they have been, in conſequence, more or leſs advantageous to nations.

If juſtice and truth be ſiſters, there can be no laws really uſeful, but ſuch as are founded on a thorough knowledge of nature, and of the true intereſt of mankind. Every law, whoſe baſis is falſhood (9), or ſome falſe revelation, is always detrimental. It is not on ſuch foundation that an intelligent man will erect the principles of equity. If the Turk permit the principles of juſt, and unjuſt, to be drawn from the Koran, and will not ſuffer them to be taken from the Veddam, it is becauſe, having no prejudice for the latter book, he is fearful of fixing juſtice on a ruinous foundation. He would not confirm their principles by falſe revelations (10). The evils that ariſe from falſe religions, are real; the good imaginary.

confidence, therefore, can the variable morality of the theologians inſpire mankind? True morality, draws its principles from reaſon, and from a love of the public good; and ſuch principles are always the ſame.

Of what uſe, in fact, can they be? Their precepts are either contrary, or conformable, to the law of nature, that is, to what mature reaſon dictates to ſocieties for their greateſt happineſs.

In the firſt caſe, the precepts of ſuch religion muſt be rejected, as contrary to the public welfare.

In the ſecond, they muſt be admitted. But then, of what uſe is a religion which teaches nothing that ſound ſenſe does not teach without it?

The precepts of reaſon, they will ſay, when conſecrated by a revelation, will at leaſt appear more reſpectable. Yes, in the firſt moments of fervor; for then maxims believed to be true, becauſe they are ſuppoſed to be revealed, act more forcibly on the imagination. But that enthuſiaſtic ſpirit is ſoon diſſipated.

Of all precepts, thoſe whoſe truths are demonſtrable, have alone a durable command over the mind of man. A revelation merely from its being uncertain and conteſtable, far from fortifying the demonſtration of a moral principle, muſt, in time, obſcure its evidence (11).

Truth and falſhood are two heterogenous beings. They never go together. Beſide, all men are not actuated by religion: all have not faith, but all are animated by a deſire of happineſs, and graſp at it wherever the law preſents it to them.

Principles

Principles that are reſpected becauſe they are revealed (12), are always the leaſt fixed. Daily interpreted by the prieſt, they are as variable as his intereſts, and almoſt always in contradiction with the intereſt of the public. Every nation, for example, deſires that its prince ſhould be intelligent. The prieſt, on the contrary, would have him ſtupid. What art does he not employ for that purpoſe?

There is no anecdote that better expoſes the ſpirit of the clergy, than the following fact, ſo frequently repeated by the proteſtants.

It was under conſideration, in a great kingdom, what books a young prince ſhould be permitted to read. The council was aſſembled on this occaſion. The confeſſor of the young prince preſided. There were firſt propoſed the Decades of Livy, with the Comments of Machiavel, the Spirit of Laws, Montaigne, Voltaire, &c. Theſe works being ſucceſſively rejected. The Jeſuit confeſſor at laſt got up, and ſaid, "I ſaw, the other day, on "the table of the prince, the catechiſm, and the "French Cook: there are no books that can do "him leſs harm."

The power of the prieſt, like that of the courtier, always depends on the ignorance and ſtupidity of the monarch. There is, therefore, nothing he will not do to render him a ſot, inacceſſible to his ſubjects, and diſguſted with the cares of adminiſtration.

In the time of the czar Peter, Sevach Huſſein, ſophy of Perſia, perſuaded by the vizirs, by the prieſts, and by his own idleneſs, that his dignity would not permit him to employ himſelf about public affairs, left them to his favourites, and was ſoon after dethroned.

CHAP. III.

What ſort of religion would be uſeful.

THE principle moſt fruitful in public calamities, is ignorance (13). It is on the perfection of the laws (14), that the virtues of the citizens depend; and on the progreſs of human reaſon that depends the perfection of the laws. To be honeſt (15), a man muſt be intelligent. Why then is the tree of knowledge ſtill prohibited by deſpotiſm, and the prieſthood? Every religion that honours a poverty of underſtanding in man, is a dangerous religion. The pious ſtupidity of the papiſts does not render them better. What army occaſions the leaſt devaſtation in a country? Is it a religious army, an army of croiſades? No; an army the beſt diſciplined.

Now if diſcipline, a fear of the general, can ſuppreſs licentiouſneſs in the troops, and reſtrain with their duty, young ferocious ſoldiers, who are daily accuſtomed to brave death in combat, what cannot the fear of the laws operate upon the timid inhabitants of cities?

It is not the anathemas of religion, but the ſword of juſtice, that in cities diſarms the aſſaſſin: it is the executioner that reſtrains the arm of the murderer. The fear of puniſhment, therefore, can do all in the camp (16), and in the city alſo. In one it renders the army obedient and brave, and in the other the citizens juſt and virtuous. It is not ſo with religions. Papiſm commands temperance; yet, in what years do we ſee the feweſt drunkards? Is it in thoſe the moſt ſermons are preached? No; but thoſe in which the leaſt wine is made. The Roman catholic religion has forbid, at all times, theft, rapine, violations of chaſtity, murder, &c. and in the moſt religious ages, that is, the 9th, 10th, and 11th, Europe was peopled by robbers. What was the cauſe of ſo much violence and injuſtice? The too weak barrier of the laws, that were then oppoſed to crimes. A fine, greater or leſs, was the only chaſtiſment for the greateſt villanies. A certain ſum was paid for the murder of a knight, a baron, a count, a legate, in ſhort, even to the aſſaſſination of a prince, all had a fixed rate *.

Duelling was for a long time faſhionable in Europe, and eſpecially in France. Religion forbade it, yet they fought every day †. Luxury

* See Vol. I. of M. Hume's Hiſtory of England.

† Every crime not puniſhed by the law, is a crime daily committed. What ſtronger proof can there be of the inutility of religions?

has

has ſince ſoftened the manners of the French. Duelling is puniſhed with death. The delinquents are, at leaſt, almoſt all obliged to fly their country. There is no longer any duelling.

From whence ariſes the preſent ſecurity of Paris? From the devotion of its inhabitants? No; but from the regularity and vigilance of the police (17). The Pariſians of the laſt age were more devout, and greater thieves. Virtue, therefore, is the work of the laws *, and not of religion. As a proof of which, I cite the little influence of our faith on our practice.

CHAP. IV.

Of the religion of the Papiſts

MORE conſiſtency in the minds of men would render the papiſtical religion more detrimental to a ſtate. If, in this religion, celibacy be eſteemed the ſtate moſt perfect and moſt pleaſing to heaven †, there could be no believer, if he were conſiſtent, who would not live unmarried.

* When a public feaſt is given, and badly regulated, there are many robberies; when it is well regulated, there are none. In theſe two caſes, a good or bad police, renders the ſame men honeſt or rogues.

† It is to the imperfection and inconſequence of men, that the world owes its duration. A ſort of ſecret incredulity frequently oppoſes the pernicious effects of religious principles. It is with the eccleſiaſtical laws as with the regulations of commerce

In this religion, if there be many called and few choſen, every tender mother ought to murder her children as ſoon as they are baptized, that they may the ſooner and the more certainly enjoy eternal happineſs.

In this religion, which do the preachers ſay, is the death to be feared? An unforſeen death. Which is to be deſired? That for which men are prepared. Where is that death to be found? On the ſcaffold. But that ſuppoſes a crime: a crime muſt therefore be committed *.

In this religion, what uſe ſhould be made of money? It ſhould be given to the monks, that they may free ſouls, by their prayers and their maſſes, from purgatory.

When a wretch is chained to a pile of faggots, that is going to be lighted, who would not give his purſe to relieve the unhappy man? Who would not find himſelf compelled to this act by an involuntary commiſeration? Do we owe leſs to

commerce, if they be bad, it is to the indocility of the merchants that the ſtate owes its riches; their obedience would ruin it.

* A fact of this ſort happened a few years ſince in Pruſſia. A ſoldier, as he came from hearing a ſermon on an unforſeen death, killed a child. Wretch! they cried, how cameſt thou to commit this crime? From a deſire of going to heaven, he replied. For this murder I ſhall be ſent to priſon, from the priſon to the ſcaffold, and from the ſcaffold to heaven. The king being informed of this fact, forbade the miniſters to preach any more ſermons of that ſort, or even to attend criminals at their execution.

ſouls

ſouls that are deſtined to remain in flames for many ages?

A true Roman Catholic ought therefore to reproach himſelf with every expence in luxury and ſuperfluities. He ought to live on bread, water, and pulſe. But the biſhop himſelf feaſts on rich food, drinks excellent wine, and rides in his coach *. Moſt of the Papiſts wear laced cloaths, and ſpend more in hounds, horſes, and equipages, than in maſſes. This is the conſequence of their inconſiſtency with their belief. On the ſuppoſition of a purgatory, he that gives alms to the poor, makes a bad uſe of his money; for it is not to the living, but the dead, he ſhould give it, as it is to them moſt neceſſary.

Formerly, more ſenſible of the misfortunes of the dead, more legacies were left to the eccleſiaſtics. Men did not die without giving them a part of their property. They did not indeed make this ſacrifice, till they were bereaved of all health to enjoy pleaſure, or intellects to defend themſelves againſt monaſtic inſinuations. The monks where moreover dreaded, and perhaps they gave more from a fear of the monk than a love of ſouls.

* The preſent indifference of the biſhops about purgatory, makes it ſuſpected that they are not themſelves well convinced of the exiſtence of a place they have never ſeen. Men are moreover aſtoniſhed that a ſoul ſhould remain there a longer or ſhorter time, according to the number of ſix-penny pieces that are given to ſay maſſes, and that money ſhould be more uſeful in the other world than in this.

Without

Without this fear, the belief of purgatory would have never ſo much enriched the church. The conduct of men and of nations is therefore rarely conſiſtent with their belief, or even their ſpeculative principles. Theſe principles are almoſt always fruitleſs.

If I ſhould eſtabliſh the moſt abſurd opinion, and from which the moſt deteſtable conſequences might be drawn, if I make no alteration in the laws, I ſhould make no change in the manners of a people. It is not a falſe maxim in morality that will render me wicked *, but the intereſt I have to be ſo.

I ſhall become wicked, if the laws detach my intereſt from that of the public; if I cannot find my happineſs but in the miſery of another †; and if by the form of government crimes are rewarded, virtue neglected, and vice elevated to the poſt of higheſt eminence.

Intereſt is the productive cauſe of virtue and vice. It is not the erroneous opinion of a writer, that can increaſe the number of robbers in an em-

* In morality, ſays Machiavel, whatever abſurd opinion we advance, we do not thereby injure ſociety, provided we do not maintain that opinion by force. In every ſort of ſcience, it is by exhauſting the errors, that we come at laſt to the ſpring of truth. In morality, the thing really uſeful, is the inquiry after truth, and the non-inquiry that is really detrimental. He that extols ignorance is a knave that would make dupes.

† Man is the enemy, the murderer of almoſt all animals. Why? Becauſe his ſubſiſtence depends on their deſtruction.

pire.

pire. The doctrine of the Jesuits favoured robbery; that doctrine was condemned by the magistrates; decency required it: but they did not find that their doctrine had increased the number of robbers. Why? Because it had not changed the laws; because the police remained equally vigilant; that they inflicted the same punishment on the guilty, and that except in the case of a famine, a revolution, or a similar event, the same laws must in all times produce nearly the same number of robbers.

Suppose we would increase the number of thieves, what must be done?

Augment the taxes, and the wants of the people.

Oblige every tradesman to travel with a purse of gold.

Place fewer patroles on the highways.

And lastly, abolish the punishment for robbery.

We should then soon see impunity multiply transgressions.

It is not, therefore, on the truth of a revelation, or the purity of a worship, but solely on the sagacity or absurdity of the laws, that the virtues or vices of the citizens depend *. The religion

* Plato doubtless perceived this truth, when he said, "The "time when cities and their citizens shall be delivered from "their evils, will be that, when philosophy and power being "united in the same man, shall render virtue victorious over "vice."

truly uſeful, is that which obliges men to inſtruct themſelves. Which are the moſt perfect governments? Thoſe whoſe ſubjects are the moſt intelligent. The government of the Jeſuits is the moſt proper of all others to demonſtrate this truth. It is, of its kind, a chef d'œuvre of the human mind. Let us examine their conſtitutions; we ſhall thereby more clearly ſee the power that legiſlation has on mankind.

" vice." M. Rouſſeau is not of this opinion. Let him however vaunt, as much as he will, the ſincerity and truth of a barbarous people, I ſhall not believe it on his word.

The fact is, ſays M. Hume, vol. i. of his Hiſtory of England, that the Anglo-Saxons, like all other ignorant and thieviſh people, proclaimed their falſity and perjury with an impudence unknown to civilized nations.

It is reaſon, improved by experience, that alone can demonſtrate to nations the intereſts they have to be juſt, humane, and faithful to their promiſes. Superſtition does not in this caſe produce the effects of reaſon. Our devout anceſtors ſwore to their treaties by the croſs and relics, and were perjured. Modern nations do not guaranty their treaties by ſuch oaths: they deſpiſe ſuch uſeleſs ſecurities.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the government of the Jeſuits.

I SHALL here conſider the conſtitution of the Jeſuits only, as relative to their ambitious views. The Jeſuits ſought credit, power, importance, and obtained them in the catholic courts.

What means did they employ for this purpoſe? Terror and ſeduction.

What rendered them formdiable to princes? The union of their will with that of their general. The force of ſuch an union is not yet perhaps ſufficiently known.

Antiquity affords no model of the governments of the Jeſuits. Suppoſe we had aſked of the ancients the ſolution of the following political problem.

" How one man, from the center of a monaſ-
" try, can rule an infinity of others, diſperſed
" over different climates, and ſubject to different
" laws and ſovereigns. How this man, often at
" immenſe diſtances, can preſerve an authority
" over his ſubjects, ſufficient to make them at his
" pleaſure, move, act, think, and conſtantly
" regulate their conduct by the ambitious views
" of their order."

Before

Before the inſtitution of monaſtic orders, this would have appeared the problem of a madman. It would have been ranked with the Platonic chimeras. This chimera, however, has been realized. With regard to the means the general makes uſe of to ſecure the obedience of the religious, they are ſufficiently known: I ſhall not ſtay to explain them.

But how, with ſo few ſubjects, does he often poſſeſs ſovereigns who ſo much fear? That is a maſterpiece of politics.

To produce this prodigy, the conſtitution of the Jeſuits muſt include all that is moſt advantageous to monarchical and republican governments.

On the one part, promptitude and ſecrecy in the execution.

On the other, a lively and habitual deſire to promote the grandeur of the order.

The Jeſuits for this purpoſe muſt have a deſpot at their head, but one that is ſagacious, and conſequently elective (18).

The election of this chief ſuppoſes,

The choice of a certain number of ſubjects;

Time and opportunity of ſtudying the minds, the manners, the characters, and inclinations of thoſe ſubjects.

For this effect, it is neceſſary that their pupils being brought up in the colleges of the Jeſuits,

ſhould be examined by the moſt ambitious and moſt diſcerning of the ſuperiors.

That the election being made, the new general be cloſely connected with the intereſt of the ſociety, and can have no other.

That he muſt conſequently be, like every other Jeſuit, ſubject to the principal rules of the order.

That he make the ſame vows.

Be, like them, incapable of marriage.

Have, like them, renounced all dignity, all relations, love and friendſhip.

That, entirely devoted to the Jeſuits, he have no regard but to the grandeur of the order, and conſequently have no deſire, but to increaſe their power.

That the obedience of his ſubjects furniſh him with the means.

Laſtly, the general, that he may be of the utmoſt utility poſſible to the ſociety, muſt be at liberty to be guided entirely by his own genius, that his bold conceptions may not be reſtrained by any fear.

For this purpoſe his reſidence is placed near a king that is a prieſt.

He is to be attached to this ſovereign in certain reſpects, by a bond of one common intereſt; that the general participating in ſecret the authority of the pontiff, and living in his court, may thereby brave the vengeance of kings.

It

It is from thence, in fact, in the obscurity of his cell, like a spider in the center of his web, he extends his threads over all Europe, and is by those threads informed of all that passes there.

Informed by their confessions of the vices, the talents, the virtues, and the foibles of princes, ministers, and magistrates; he knows by what intrigue the ambition of some may be favoured, that of others opposed; this flattered, that persuaded or terrified.

While he meditates on these great objects, he sees by his side monachal ambition, who holds before him the secret and awful book, in which are wrote the good and bad qualities of princes, their dispositions to the society, favourable or adverse. He marks with a stroke of blood, the names of kings, who, devouted to the vengeance of the order, are to be blotted out from the number of the living. If weak princes, struck with terror, thought there was no choice between obeying the commands of the general and death, there fear was not altogether panic. The government of the Jesuits justifies it in a certain degree. Does a man command a society whose members are in his hands, what a staff is in the hands of an old man? Does he speak by their mouth, and strike by their hands? The depositary of immense wealth, can he at his pleasure transport it wherever the interest of the order requires? Is he as despotic as the old man of the mountain,

and are his ſubjects as ſubmiſſive? Do we ſee them at his command expoſe themſelves to the greateſt dangers, and undertake the moſt hazardous enterprizes *? Such a man is doubtleſs to be dreaded.

The Jeſuits were ſenſible of this, and proud of the terror their chief inſpired; they thought of nothing but being ſecure in that redoubtable man. For this effect, if by idleneſs, or any other intereſt, the general ſhould betray that of the ſociety, he would become the object of their contempt, and might fear to be their victim. Now what government or ſociety can be named, where the head and the members have been ſo cloſely and ſo reciprocally united? It cannot be wonderful, therefore, that with means apparently ſo weak, this ſociety has in a ſhort time, arrived at ſo high a degree of power. Its power was the effect of the form of its government.

How bold ſoever were the principles of its morality, thoſe principles adopted by the popes, became in a manner the principles of the Catholic church. That this dangerous morality has had few fatal effects in the hands of ſeculars is not ſurpriſing. It is not the reading of a Buſembaum, or a La Croix, that makes regicides; it is in the

* If the Jeſuits have, on a thouſand occaſions, ſhown as much intrepidity as the Abyſſinians, it is becauſe among thoſe religious, as among thoſe formidable Africans, heaven is the reward of devoting themſelves to the orders of their chief.

ignorance and ſolitude of a cloiſter that thoſe monſters are engendered, and it is from thence they dart forth on a prince. It is in vain the monk in arming them with a poignard, would hide the hand from which they receive it. Nothing is more diſtinguiſhable than the crimes committed by ſacerdotal ambition. To prevent them, let the friend of kings and enemy of fanatiſm, learn by what certain ſigns they may diſtinguiſh the ſeveral cauſes of atrocious enterprizes.

CHAP. VI.

Of the ſeveral cauſes of atrocious enterprizes.

THESE cauſes are the love of glory, of ambition, and fanaticiſm. How powerful ſoever theſe paſſions may be, they do not commonly equal in man the love of ſelf-preſervation and felicity. He will not brave danger and torture, attempt any perilous enterprize, if the advantage attending the ſucceſs does not bear ſome proportion to the danger. This is a fact, that is proved by the experience of all ages.

CHAP. VII.

Of atrocious enterprizes committed from a love of glory, or of our country.

WHEN, to reſcue themſelves and their country from the fetters of ſlavery, Dion, Pelopidas, Aratus, and Timoleon, meditated the murder of a tyrant, what were their hopes and their fears? They were in no dread of the ſhame and puniſhment of a Ravaillac. If fortune abandoned them in their enterprize, the hero, conſtantly ſupported by a powerful party, could always flatter himſelf with dying ſword in hand. If he were ſucceſsful, he became the idol of his country. The recompence, therefore, bore at leaſt ſome proportion to the danger.

When Brutus followed Cæſar to the ſenate, he doubtleſs ſaid to himſelf, "The name of Bru-" tus, that name already conſecrated by the ex-" pulſion of the Tarquins, commands me to " murder the dictator, and makes it my duty. If I " ſucceed, I ſhall deſtroy a deſpotic government, " and diſarm that tyranny which is ready to " pour forth the pureſt blood of Rome, that I " ſhall ſave from deſtruction, and of which I ſhall " become a new founder. If I fail in my enter-" prize, I ſhall periſh by my own hands, or by " thoſe

" thoſe of the enemy. The recompence there-
" fore is adequate to the danger."

Would the virtuous Brutus, at the time of the league, have held the ſame diſcourſe? Would he have lifted his arm againſt his ſovereign? No: what advantage would it have been to France, and what glory to himſelf, to have been the vile inſtrument of papal ambition, and the aſſaſſin of his maſter?

In a monarchical government there are but two motives that can induce a ſubject to become a regicide; the one a terreſtrial, the other a celeſtial crown. Ambition and fanaticiſm can alone produce ſuch enormous attempts.

CHAP. VIII.

Of atrocious enterprizes committed by ambition.

THE enterprizes of ambition are always attempted by a man in power. To induce ſuch a man to project them, it is neceſſary that when the crime is committed, the attempter may inſtantly reap the fruit of it; or if it fail, or be diſcovered, he may ſtill have ſufficient power left to intimidate the prince, or at leaſt gain time for flight.

Such was in Greece the ſituation of the generals, who, followed by their armies, marched up to

the emperor, beat him in the field, or ſtabbed him on the throne.

Such is ſtill at Conſtantinople that of the Aga or Ottoman prince, when at the head of the Janiſſaries, he forces the ſeraglio, arreſts and kills the ſultan; who has often no other way to ſecure his throne and his life, than by the murder of his neareſt relations.

The condition of the regicide almoſt always declares with what paſſion he is animated, whether by ambition or religious fanaticiſm.

CHAP. IX.

Of atrocious enterprizes committed by fanatiſm.

THE ambitious regicide is to be found in the claſs of great men only: the fanatical regicide is to be found in all, and moſt frequently even in the very loweſt; becauſe every man can pretend to a celeſtial throne and recompence. There are alſo other ſigns by which we may diſtinguiſh theſe two ſorts of regicides. Nothing is more different than their conduct in the ſame attempt.

When the firſt of theſe loſes all hopes of eſcaping, and is on the point of being taken, he poiſons or kills himſelf on the body of his victim. The other does not attempt his own life: his religion forbid; that alone can reſtrain the arm of a man of

ſufficient

ſufficient intrepidity to undertake ſuch a crime; that alone can make him prefer the frightful death he muſt undergo on a ſcaffold, to the eaſy death he might give himſelf on the ſpot.

The fanatic is an inſtrument of vengeance, that the monk fabricates, and employs wherever his intereſt directs him.

CHAP. X.

Of the period at which the intereſt of the Jeſuits commands them to undertake an atrocious enterprize.

WHEN the intereſt of the Jeſuits declines; when they expect from a new government more favour than from that which exiſts; when the meekneſs of the reigning prince, and the power of the religious party at court aſſure them of impunity; it is then they meditate their deteſtable project. They prepare the people for ſome great event; inſpire them with preverſe paſſions; and terrify their imaginations, either as formerly by predictions of the approaching diſſolution of the world, or of a total overthrow of religion. At the time theſe ideas, being put in fermentation, heat the minds of men, and become the general ſubject of converſation, the Jeſuits ſearch out the frantic wretch who is to aid their ambition. Villains of this ſort are rare. To undertake an enterprize of this kind, a man muſt have a ſoul poſ-

ſeſſed

ſeſſed of violent and oppoſite ſentiments; a ſoul at once ſuſceptible of the laſt degree of villainy, devotion, credulity, and remorſe. A man at once bold, prudent, impetuous, and wary. Characters of this ſort are the produce of the moſt gloomy and inexorable paſſions. But how is the ſoul inflamable by fanaticiſm, to be diſtinguiſhed? By what means can we diſcover the ſeeds of thoſe paſſions, which, though ſtrong, contrary, and proper to form a regicide, are always inviſible before they are put in action? The tribunal of confeſſion is the microſcope by which thoſe ſeeds become viſible. At that tribunal (19) where the man ſtands naked, the right of interrogation gives the monk an opportunity of examining all the hidden foldings of his ſoul.

The general, inſtructed by the confeſſions, of the manners, paſſions, and diſpoſitions of an infinity of penitents, has the choice of too great a number, not to find a fit inſtrument for his vengeance.

The fanatic found, and the choice fixed, it remains to ſet his zeal on fire. Enthuſiaſm is a contagious diſorder, ſays lord Shafteſbury, that is communicated by the geſture, the look, the tone of the voice, &c. This the general knows: he commands, and the fanatic being taken into a houſe of Jeſuits, there finds himſelf in the midſt of enthuſiaſts. It is there that being animated by the ſentiments of thoſe that ſurround him, he is made to believe that

that he really thinks what they ſuggeſt to him, and by being familiariſed with the idea of the crime he is to commit, is rendered inacceſſible to remorſe.

The remorſe of a moment would be ſufficient to diſarm the hand of an aſſaſſin. There is no man ſo hardened as to reflect without horror on an action ſo atrocious, and on the puniſhment he is to ſuffer. The only mean to diveſt him of that horror, is ſo to exalt in him the ſpirit of fanaticiſm, that the idea of his crime, far from being aſſociated in his memory with that of his puniſhment, may ſolely excite in him the ideas of thoſe celeſtial pleaſures that are to be the reward of his enterprize.

Of all religious orders, that of the Jeſuits is at once the moſt powerful, intelligent, and enthuſiaſtic. Conſequently there is none that can operate ſo ſtrongly on the imagination of a fanatic, and none that can with leſs danger attempt the life of a prince. The blind ſubmiſſion of the Jeſuits to the orders of their general, makes them all ſecure in each other. Without diffidence in this reſpect, they therefore give an intire liberty to their thoughts.

The fear of puniſhment cannot damp their zeal, as they are rarely charged with committing a crime, till the time of its execution. Each Jeſuit, ſupported by all the credit and power of the order, knows that he is ſecure from every inqui-

ry,

ry, till the conſummation of the attempt, and that no one will dare to be the accuſer of a member of a ſociety ſo formidable by its riches, by the great number of ſpies it keeps in pay, by the great men who are under its direction, by the citizens it protects, and who are attached to it by the indiſſoluble bond of hope and fear.

The Jeſuit knows moreover, that the crime being committed, nothing is more difficult than to convict the ſociety of it; who laviſhing gold and menaces, and ſuppoſing itſelf always calumniated, can conſtantly ſpread over the blackeſt crimes that obſcurity ſo favourable to the Jeſuits, who are well content to be ſuſpected of great crimes, as they thereby become the more redoubtable; but who would not be convicted of them, as they would thereby become too odious.

By what means in fact can they be convicted? The general knows the names of all who are concerned in a grand enterprize, and can, on the firſt ſuſpicion, diſperſe them in unknown and foreign convents; where he can, under falſe names, ſecure them from a common purſuit. Does the inquiry become ſerious? The general is always ſure to render it abortive, either by concealing the accuſed in the receſs of a cloiſter, or by making him a ſacrifice to the intereſt of the order. Without ſo many reſources and impunities, it is not wonderful that ſuch a ſociety has dared ſo much; and that encouraged by the encomiums of their order,

its

its members have often executed the moſt daring enterprizes.

We ſee there in the very form of jeſuitical government, the cauſe of that fear and reſpect they inſpire, and the reaſon why, ſince their eſtabliſhment, there has been no religious war, revolution, aſſaſſination of monarchs, in China, Ethiopia, Holland, France, England, Portugal, Geneva, &c. in which the Jeſuits have not had ſome ſhare.

The ambition of the general, and the aſſiſtants, is the ſoul of the ſociety. There are none who, more jealous of dominion, have employed more means to ſecure it. The ſecular clergy are without doubt ambitious; but though animated with the ſame paſſion, they have not the ſame means to gratify it. They are rarely regicides.

The Jeſuit is under the immediate dependence of a ſuperior (20). It is not ſo with the ſecular prieſt. He, mixing with the world, and diſſipated by his employment and his pleaſure, is not confined to a ſingle idea. His fanatiſm is not inceſſantly exalted by the preſence of other fanatics. Beſide, not having the power of a religious body, if culpable, he would be puniſhed. He is therefore leſs enterpriſing, and leſs formidable than the regular.

The real crime of the Jeſuits was not the depravity of their morals *, but their conſtitution,

* Falſe principles of morality are only dangerous when they become laws.

their

their riches, their power, their ambition, and the incompatibility of their intereſts with that of the nation.

How perfect ſoever the legiſlation of theſe religious has been, whatever empire they have had over the people, yet it will be ſaid, theſe ſo redoubtable Jeſuits are at this day baniſhed from France, Portugal, and Spain: true, becauſe their vaſt projects were timely oppoſed.

In every monaſtic conſtitution there is a radical defect, which is the want of real power That of the monks is founded on the folly and ſtupidity of mankind. Now the human mind muſt in time become enlightened, or at leaſt change its folly. The Jeſuits, who foreſaw this, where in conſequence deſirous of uniting in their hands the temporal and ſpiritual powers. They would terrify princes by their armies, when they could not do it by the poignard or by poiſon. For this purpoſe they had already laid, in Paraguay and California, the foundations of new empires.

If the ſlumber of the magiſtrate had continued, perhaps, a century longer, it would have been impoſſible to oppoſe their deſigns. The union of the temporal and ſpiritual powers would have rendered them too formidable: they would for ever have held the catholics in blindneſs, and their princes in humiliation. Nothing better proves the degree of authority, to which the Jeſuits had already arrived,

rived, than the meaſures taken in France for their expulſion *.

Why did the magiſtracy ſo warmly attack their books (21)? They, doubtleſs, ſaw the inſignificance of ſuch accuſation. But they ſaw alſo that it was this accuſation alone, which could deſtroy their influence over the minds of the people. All other means would have been ineffectual.

Suppoſe, in fact, that the act for their baniſhment had contained only motives for the public good.

"Every numerous ſociety, it would have ſaid, "is ambitious, and only ſolicitous for its parti- "cular intereſt. Therefore, by not having any "connexion with the public intereſt, it becomes "dangerous to ſociety. With regard to that of "the Jeſuits, it would have added, it is evident, "that being by its conſtitution ſubject to a foreign "deſpot, it cannot have an intereſt conformable "to that of the public †."

* When terrified by the remonſtrances of their parliaments, we ſee kings deliver themſelves up to the Jeſuits, we cannot avoid recollecting the fable of the young mouſe. What a noiſy animal I juſt now met! he ſays to his mother, they call it a cock. I ſhudder with fear. I ſhould not have been able to have got hither, had it not been for the preſence of a very gentle animal; it ſeems to be of our kind. Its name is a cat. O! my ſon, it is of the latter you muſt beware.

† The magiſtrates may without doubt apply to the Jeſuits theſe words of Hobbes to the popiſh prieſts. "You are, he "ſays, a confederation of ambitious knaves. Eager to rule "over the people, you endeavour, by virtue of myſteries and "nonſenſe, to extinguiſh in them the lights of reaſon, and of "the Goſpel. To believe in the truth of a prieſt, ſays, on "this

" The extreme extent of the commerce of the " Jeſuits, may be deſtructive to that of the nation : " and the immenſe riches they gain by that com- " merce *, being tranſported, at the pleaſure of " their general, into China, Spain, Germany, " Italy, &c. cannot but impoveriſh a nation."

To conclude, a ſociety become conſpicuous by atrocious attempts without number ; a ſociety compoſed of men of ſobriety, who to multiply their partiſans, offer protections, credit, and riches, to their friends ; perſecution, calamity, and death to their enemies, is certainly a ſociety whoſe projects muſt be at once boundleſs, and deſtructive of the general happineſs.

How reaſonable ſoever theſe motives may be, they would have made but little impreſſion, and the powerful and protected order of the Jeſuits would never have been ſacrificed to reaſon, and the public good.

" this ſubject, the poet Lee, is to confide in the ſmiles of the " great, in the tears of a harlot, in the oaths of a tradeſman, " and in the grief of an heir."

* The riches of the Jeſuits are immenſe, they ſow not, neither do they dig, and yet, ſays Shakeſpeare, it is they that gather all the fruits of the earth. They even preſs out the very juice of poverty.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

That Janſeniſm alone could deſtroy the Jeſuits.

TO attack the Jeſuits with advantage, what ſhould be done? Oppoſe paſſion to paſſion, ſect to ſect, fanatiſm to fanatiſm. The Janſeniſts ſhould be armed againſt them. Now, the Janſeniſt, inſenſible, by devotion (22) or ſtupidity, to the misfortunes of his fellows, would never have oppoſed the Jeſuits, if they had regarded them only as enemies of the public. The magiſtrates were ſenſible of this, and knew that to animate them againſt the Jeſuits, their imaginations muſt be heated, and by ſuch a book as that of the Aſſertions, their ears muſt be inceſſantly filled with the words impudicity, the ſin of philoſophy, magic, aſtrology, idolatry, &c.

The magiſtrates have been reproached with theſe Aſſertions. They have, it is ſaid, degraded their character and their dignity, by preſenting themſelves to the public under the form of controvertiſts (23). Doubtleſs, neither princes nor magiſtrates ought to follow the vile profeſſion of ſophiſters and theologians. The diſputes of the ſchools contract the mind, and are incompatible with the grand views of adminiſtration (24).

If theſe matters be treated with too much importance they announce the greateſt evils. They

preſage a St. Bartholomew. The golden age of a nation is not that of controverſies. However, if at the time of the affair of the Jeſuits, the magiſtrates of France had but little credit and authority: if the ſituation of the parliaments, with regard to the Jeſuits, was ſuch, that they could not ſerve the public but under pretexts, and by motives different from thoſe that really determined them; why ſhould they not make uſe of them, and profit by the contempt into which the books and the morals of the Jeſuits were fallen, to deliver France from monks, become ſo formidable by their power, their intrigues, their riches, their ambition (25), and above all, by their conſtitution, which furniſhed them with means to enſlave the minds of men?

The real crime of the Jeſuits was the excellence of their government; that excellence was every where deſtructive of the public happineſs.

It muſt be confeſſed that the Jeſuits have been one of the moſt cruel ſcourges of nations; but without them we ſhould never have perfectly known what a body of laws directed to one end, was capable of operating on men.

What did the Jeſuits purſue? The power and riches of their order. Now, no legiſlation with ſo few means, has better accompliſhed that grand object. If an example of a government ſo perfect is not to be found among any people, the reaſon is, becauſe in its eſtabliſhment it is neceſſa-

ry

ry to have, like Romulus, a new empire to found.

Now mankind are rarely in that ſituation, and in any other, perhaps, it is impoſſible to form ſo perfect a legiſlation.

CHAP. XII.

The examination of this truth.

WHEN a man eſtabliſhes new laws in an empire, it is either in quality of a magiſtrate appointed by the people to correct the ancient legiſlation, or in quality of victor, that is, under the title of conqueſt. Such were the different poſitions in which were Solon on the one part, Alexander and Tamerlane on the other.

In the firſt of theſe poſitions the magiſtrate, as Solon lamented, is forced to conform to the manners and taſtes of thoſe that employ him. They do not require an excellent legiſlation: it would be too diſcordant with their manners and their taſtes. They ſimply require the correction of ſome abuſes crept into their preſent form of government: the magiſtrate conſequently cannot give a full ſcope to his genius. He cannot attempt a grand plan, or the eſtabliſhment of a perfect government.

In the ſecond of theſe poſitions, what does the conqueror at firſt propoſe? To eſtabliſh his authority over nations impoveriſhed, exhauſted by war, and ſtill irritated by their defeat. If he impoſe ſome of the laws of his own country, it is by adopting a part of theirs. The evils that reſult from a mixture of laws, often contradictory to each other, concern him little.

It is not immediately after conqueſt that the victor can conceive the vaſt project of a perfect legiſlation. The ſtill uncertain poſſeſſor of a new crown, the only matter he then requires of his new ſubjects, is their ſubmiſſion: and when will he concern himſelf about their felicity?

There is no muſe to whom a temple has not been erected: no ſcience that has not been cultivated in ſome academy: no academy where ſome prize has not been propoſed for the ſolution of certain problems in mechanics, agriculture, optics, aſtronomy, mechanics, &c. By what fatality have the ſciences of morality and politics, without diſpute the moſt important of all, and that contribute the moſt to the national felicity, been hitherto without public ſchools?

What proof more ſtriking of the indifference of men for the happineſs of their fellows? (26)

Why

Why have not people in power already inſtituted academies of morality and politics. Do they fear that ſuch academies ſhould at laſt reſolve the problem of an excellent legiſlation, and ſecure the perpetual felicity of the people? They would doubtleſs fear it, if they ſuſpected that the public felicity required a ſacrifice of the leaſt part of their authority. There is but one intereſt that does not oppoſe the national intereſt, which is that of the weak. The prince commonly ſees nothing in nature but himſelf. What intereſt can he have in the felicity of his ſubjects? Can he love them when he loads them with fetters? Is it from the car of victory, and the throne of deſpotiſm, that he can give them uſeful laws? Drunk with ſucceſs, what imports to a conqueror the felicity of his ſlaves?

With regard to the magiſtrate charged by a republic with the reformation of its laws, he has uſually too many different intereſts to manage, and too many different opinions to reconcile, to effect any thing great and ſimple of this nature. It appertains to the founder of a colony only, who commands over men as yet without prejudices and habits, to reſolve the problem of an excellent legiſlation. Nothing in this ſituation can impede the progreſs of his genius, nor oppoſe the eſtabliſhment of the moſt ſagacious laws. Their perfection can have no bounds but thoſe of his capacity.

But why are the monaſtic laws, with regard to the object they propoſe, the leaſt imperfect of all others? Becauſe the founder of a religious order, is in the ſame ſituation as the founder of a colony.

Ignatius, when tracing in ſilence and retreat the plan of his order, was not impeded by the taſtes and opinions of his future ſubjects. His regulations made, and his order eſtabliſhed, he was ſurrounded by novices, the more ſubmiſſive to his rules as they embraced them voluntarily, and conſequently approved the rules they were bound to obſerve. Can it then be ſurpriſing, that in their kind, ſuch regulations are more perfect than thoſe of any nation?

Of all ſtudies, that of the ſeveral monaſtic conſtitutions is perhaps the moſt curious, and moſt inſtructive for magiſtrates, philoſophers, and ſtateſmen in general. They are experiments in miniature, that by diſcovering the ſecret cauſes of the felicity, grandeur, and power of the ſeveral religious orders prove, as I propoſed to ſhow, that it is not on religion, nor on what they call morality, nearly the ſame among all nations and all monks, but on legiſlation alone, that depend the vices, the virtues, the power, and felicity of a people.

The laws are the ſoul of an empire, the inſtruments of public felicity. Theſe inſtruments at firſt rude, may become every day more improved.

But

But to what degree may they be improved, and how far may the excellence of a legiſlation increaſe the happineſs of a people * ? To reſolve this queſtion, we muſt firſt know wherein conſiſts the happineſs of individuals.

* Among the different religious orders, thoſe whoſe government approaches the neareſt to the form of a republic, and whoſe ſubjects are the moſt free and moſt happy, are in general thoſe whoſe manners are the beſt, and whoſe morals are the leaſt erroneous. Such are the Doctrinarians and the Oratorians.

NOTES.

1. (page 144.) ALL the French boaſt of being affectionate friends. When the Treatiſe on the Mind appeared, they railed loudly againſt the chapter on friendſhip. One would have thought Paris was peopled with Oreſtes and Pylades. It is in this nation, however, that the military law obliges a ſoldier to ſhoot his companion, and his friend, who is a deſerter. The eſtabliſhment of ſuch a law does not prove a great reſpect for friendſhip in the government; nor the obedience to it, a great tenderneſs for their friends among the people.

2. (ibid.) Whoever, ſay the Stoics, deſires to injure himſelf, and without motives ſhould throw himſelf into the fire, the ſea, or out of a window, would be juſtly thought a madman, for in his natural ſtate man purſues pleaſure and flies pain, and in all his actions is neceſſarily determined by a deſire of happineſs, real or apparent. Man, therefore, is not free. His will is as neceſſarily the effect of his ideas, and conſequently of his ſenſations, as pain is the effect of a blow. Beſide, add the Stoics, is there a ſingle inſtant when the liberty of man can be referred to the different operations of the ſame mind?

If, for example, the ſame thing cannot, at the ſame inſtant, be and not be, it is not therefore poſſible,

That at the moment the mind acts, it could act otherwiſe;

That at the moment it choſes, it could choſe otherwiſe;

That at the moment it deliberates, it could deliberate otherwiſe;

That at the moment it wills, it could will otherwiſe.

Now if it be my will, ſuch as it is, that makes me deliberate; if my deliberation, ſuch as it is, makes me chooſe; if my choice, ſuch as it is, makes me act; and if when I deliberated, it was not poſſible for me (conſidering the love I have for myſelf) not to deliberate; it is evident that liberty does not conſiſt in the actual volition, nor in the actual deliberation, nor in the actual choice, nor in the actual action, and,

in

in ſhort, that liberty does not relate to any of the operations of the mind.

If that were the caſe, the ſame thing, as I have already ſaid, muſt be and not be, at the ſame inſtant. Now, add the Stoics, this is the queſtion we aſk the philoſophers. "Can the mind "be free, if when it wills, when it deliberates, and when it "choſes, it is not free?"

3. (p. 145.) There is ſcarce any ſaint who has not, once in life-time, dipped his hands in human blood, and put his man to death. The biſhop who lately ſo earneſtly ſolicited the death of a young man of Abbeville, was a ſaint. He would have the youth expiate, in horrid torments, the crime of having ſung ſome licentious couplets.

4. (ibid.) If we maſſacre the heretics, ſay the bigots, it is from pity. We would only make them feel the goad of charity. We hope, by the fear of death and the executioner, to ſave them from hell. But how long has charity had a goad? How long has it cut men's throats? Beſide, if vices as well as errors are damnable, why do not theſe devotees maſſacre the vicious of their own ſect?

5. (p. 146.) It is hunger, it is want, that makes the people induſtrious, and wiſe laws that make them good. If the ancient Romans, ſays Machiavel, gave examples of every ſort of virtue; if honeſty were cuſtomary among them; if in the courſe of ſeveral ages, there were ſcarce ſix or ſeven condemned to penalty, exile, or death; to what did they owe their virtues and their ſucceſs? To the wiſdom of their laws, and to the firſt diſſenſions that aroſe between the plebeians and patricians, which eſtabliſhed the equilibrium of power, that with other diſſenſions continual riſing, was maintained a long time between thoſe two bodies.

If the Romans, adds that illuſtrious writer, differing in all things from the Venetians, were neither humble in adverſity, nor preſumptuous in proſperity, the different conduct and character of thoſe two people was the effect of the difference in their diſcipline.

6. (ibid.) M. Helvetius was treated by ſome theologians as impious, and father Bertier as a ſaint. Yet the former did not, nor would injure any one; and the other ſaid publicly that if he were king, he would have drowned the preſident Monteſquieu in his own blood.

The

The one of these was an honest man, and the other a Christian.

7. (p. 147.) Just laws are all-powerful over men, command their wills, render them honest, humane, and happy. It is to four or five laws of this sort the English owe their happiness, and the security of their property and their liberty.

The first of these laws is that which gives the house of Commons the power of fixing the Subsidies.

The second is the act of Habeas Corpus.

The third is the Trial by Juries.

The fourth, the Liberty of the Press.

The fifth, the Manner of levying the Taxes.

But are not these taxes now a load to the nation? If they be, they at least do not furnish the prince with means of oppressing individuals.

This will certainly be disputed. The more numerous the taxes, the greater the legion of tax-gatherers, who are always in immediate subjection to the king or his minister, and have frequent opportunities of oppressing the people.

8. (ibid.) It is not to religion or to that innate law, engraved, as they say, on every mind, that men owe their social virtues. This so much boasted natural law is nothing more than, like other laws, the produce of experience, reflection, and judgment. If nature had impressed clear ideas of virtue on the heart, if these ideas had not been an acquisition, would men have formerly sacrificed human victims to gods whom they called good? Would the Carthaginians, to render Saturn propitious, have sacrificed their children on his altars? Would the Spaniard believe the Divinity thirsted for the blood of a Jew, or a heretic? Would whole nations flatter themselves with obtaining the favour of heaven, either by the punishment of the man who does think as their priests direct, or by the murder of a virgin, offered as an expiation for their crimes?

But suppose that the principles of the law of nature be innate: mankind must then be sensible that punishments, like crimes should be personal, and that cruelty and injustice cannot be the priests of God. Now if ideas of equity so clear and simple are not yet adopted by all nations, it is not then to religion, or to the natural law, but to instruction, that man owes his knowledge of justice and virtue.

9. (p. 149.)

9. (p. 149.) Virtue is so precious, and its practice so connected with national prosperity, that if virtue were an error, we doubtless ought to sacrifice all to it, even to the truth. But why this sacrifice, and why must falsehood be the father of virtue? Wherever private interest is confounded with that of the public, virtue becomes in every individual the necessary effect of self-love, and personal interest.

All the vices of a nation may constantly be referred to some vices in the legislation. Why are there so few honest men? Because misfortune pursues probity almost every where. If on the contrary, honours and importance were its companions, all men would be virtuous. But there are secret crimes, to which religion alone can be opposed. Of these the embezzlement of a deposit is an example. But does experience prove that a deposit can be more safely confided to a priest, than to Ninon of Enclos? Under the title of pious legacies, how many robberies are committed! How many lawful heirs deprived of their estates? Such is the corrupt source of the immense riches of the church. These are its robberies. Where are its restitutions? If the monk, it will be said, does not restore himself, he makes others restore. What may be the amount of these restitutions in a large kingdom? A hundred thousand crowns. Be it so. Now, compare this sum with that required for the maintenance of so many convents, and then judge of their utility. What would they say of a financier, who to secure the receipt of one million should expend twenty in collecting it? He would be regarded as a fool. The public is the fool, when it maintains so many priests.

Their too costly instructions are beside useless to a people in easy circumstances, active, industrious, and whose character is elevated by liberty. Among such a people, there are few secret crimes committed.

Can men be still ignorant, that it is to the union of public and private interest, the inhabitants owe their patriotic or national virtues? Will they for ever found it on errors and pretended revelations, that have for so long a time served as a cloak for the greatest crimes?

10. (ibid) If all men be born slaves to superstition, why not make use of their weakness, it will be said, to inspire them with respect for laws, and render them happy? Is it the superstitious who respect the laws? On the contrary, it is they that violate

violate them. Superſtition is a poiſoned ſource, from whence iſſue all the evils and calamities of the earth. Cannot this ſource be exhauſted? Doubtleſs it may. The people are not ſo neceſſarily ſuperſtitious as is imagined. They are what government makes them. Under a prince that is diſabuſed, they ſoon become ſo likewiſe. The monarch is at length more powerful than the gods. For which reaſon the firſt care of the prieſts is to poſſeſs the ſpirit of the prince: there are no flatteries ſo vile, that they will not deſcend to. Muſt they maintain his divine right? They are ready to do it; but on a tacit condition, that he ſhall be really theirs. If he ceaſe to be theirs, the clergy change their tone, and if circumſtances be favourable, they declare that if in Saul, Samuel depoſed the Lord's anointed, Samuel could do nothing then, that the pope cannot do now.

11. (p. 150.) An honeſt man will always obey his reaſon in preference to revelation; for it is, he will ſay, more certain that God is the author of human reaſon, that is of the faculty in man of diſtinguiſhing the true from the falſe, than that he is the author of any particular book. *That God, as the author of man, is the author of human reaſon is very certain; but can it be more certain, than that he is the author of a revelation, which bears unqueſtionable marks of a divine original.*

It is more criminal in the eyes of a wiſe man to deny our own reaſon, than to deny any revelation whatever. *For by denying the latter, we are led to inquire after its proofs, which, if it be of divine original, will be irreſiſtible.*

12. (p. 151.) The religious ſyſtem (*of the Roman Catholics*) deſtroys all proportion between the rewards decreed for the actions of men, and the utility of thoſe actions to the public. For what reaſon, in fact, is the ſoldier leſs reſpected than the monk? Why do they give to a religious who makes the vow of poverty twelve or fifteen thouſand livres per annum, to hear, once a year, the crimes or follies of a great man, and refuſe ſix hundred livres to an officer wounded in an aſſault?

13. (p. 152.) Almoſt all religions forbid men the uſe of their reaſon, and render them at once brutes, wretched and cruel. This truth is repreſented pleaſantly enough in an Engliſh piece, intituled, *The Queen of Good Senſe.* The favourites of the queen are in that piece Law, Phyſic, and a Prieſt of the Sun, named Firebrand.

Theſe

Theſe favourites, weary of a government contrary to their intereſts, call in Ignorance to their aid. He lands in the iſland of Good Senſe, at the head of a company of fidlers, buffoons, monkeys, &c. followed by a crowd of Italians and Frenchmen. The queen of Good Senſe goes forth to meet them. Firebrand ſtops her: O queen, he cries, thy throne is ſhaken: the gods arm againſt thee: their wrath is the fatal effect of thy protecting infidels. It is by my mouth the Sun ſpeaks to thee: tremble, and deliver thoſe impious wretches over to me, that I may conſign them to the flames; or heaven will accompliſh its vengeance on thee. I am a prieſt; I am infallible; I command; do thou obey; leſt I ſhould curſe the day of thy birth, as a day fatal to religion. The queen, without making any reply, ordered the trumpets to ſound the charge; ſhe is abandoned by her army, and flies into a wood. Firebrand follows and ſtabs her there. My intereſt and my religion demand, ſays he, this grand victim. But ſhall I declare myſelf the aſſaſſin? No: intereſt that commanded me to commit this murder, will have me conceal it. I will deplore my enemy in public, and celebrate her virtues. He ſaid. A ſound of war was heard. Ignorance appeared, cauſed the body of Good Senſe to be taken up, and depoſited in a monument, from whence a voice iſſued that pronounced theſe prophetic words: "Let the ſhadow of Good Senſe wander for "ever upon the earth, and let her groans be an eternal terror "to the army of Ignorance: let her ſhade be viſible only to "diſcerning men, and let them in conſequence be always treated as viſionaries."

14. (p. 152.) The laws are the public lights that ſhow the people the path of virtue. What ſhould be done to render theſe laws reſpectable? It muſt be ſhown that they evidently tend to the public utility, and be examined a long time before they are promulgated.

The laws of the Twelve Tables were wholly expoſed to the examination of the public. By ſuch conduct magiſtrates prove their ſincere deſire to eſtabliſh good laws.

Every tribunal, that at the deſire of perſons in power, eaſily inflicts the puniſhment of death on the citizens, renders the legiſlation odious, and the magiſtracy contemptible.

15. (ibid.) There are four things, ſay the Jews, that muſt deſtroy the world, one of which is a man that is religious and a fool.

16. (p. 153.)

16. (p. 153.) Every man fears pain and death. Even the ſoldier obeys this fear, and is diſciplined by it.

He who fears nothing will do nothing againſt his inclination. It is in quality of cowards that troops are brave. Now, ſaid a great prince on this ſubject, if the executioner can do all in an army, he may do all in a city.

17. (p. 154.) If the police neceſſary to ſuppreſs vice be too chargeable, it is a public calamity. If it be too inquiſitive, it corrupts the manners, by extending a ſpying treacherous ſpirit, and thereby becomes a public calamity. The police ſhould not moreover execute the vengeance of the ſtrong againſt the weak, nor impriſon a citizen without a juridical proceſs againſt him. It ought likewiſe to watch inceſſantly over itſelf. Without the greateſt vigilance its officers, becoming authoriſed malefactors, will be the more dangerous, as their numerous and ſecret crimes will remain unknown as well as unpuniſhed.

18. (p. 161.) It is not with a deſpotic Jeſuit as with an Eaſtern tyrant, who followed by a troop of banditti, to which he gives the name of an army, plunders and ravages his empire. The jeſuitical deſpot is himſelf ſubject to the rules of his order, and animated by the ſame ſpirit, derives all his importance from the power of his ſubjects. His deſpotiſm therefore cannot be detrimental to them.

19. (p. 170.) If they reckon few regicides among the reformed, it is becauſe they do not kneel before the prieſt, but confeſs themſelves to God, and not to man. It is not ſo with the Catholics. They almoſt all confeſs, and commonly before their atrocious crimes.

20. (p. 173.) The obedience of the monk to his ſuperior always renders the latter redoubtable. Does he order him to murder? The murder is executed. What religious can reſiſt his commands? How many means has the ſuperior to make him obey? To know this, let us run over the rules of the Capuchins. Clemens Papa IV. as above, cap. vi. ſect. 24, ſays, "A brother has no right to confeſs but to another brother, "unleſs in caſe of abſolute neceſſity." It ſays, ubi ſupra, cap. vi. ſect. 8. "If in priſon a brother overloaded with the "weight of his fetters, require to confeſs to a religious of the "order, he ſhall not obtain his requeſt, unleſs the guardian "ſhall judge it proper to grant him that favour and conſola-"tion. The religious cannot communicate at Eaſter, except

"by

" by the permiſſion of the ſuperior, and always in the infirmary, " or other ſecret place."

He adds as above, cap. vi. ſect. 10. " For great crimes, the " brothers ſhall be burned alive. For other crimes they ſhall be " ſtripped, and when naked they ſhall be bound to a ſtake, and " flogged without mercy, three different times, at the option " of the father prieſt. They ſhall have by meaſure only the " bread of affliction, and the water of grief. For atrocious " crimes the father prieſt may invent ſuch ſort of torment as " he ſhall think proper."

It is ſaid, as above, cap. vi. ſect. 2. " If fetters, fire, ſcourges, " thirſt, impriſonment, and the refuſal of the ſacraments, are " not ſufficient puniſhments for a brother, he ſhall be made to " confeſs the crime of which he is accuſed, and the father prieſt " ſhall invent ſuch ſort of puniſhment as he thinks fit, with- " out telling who are the accuſers and the witneſſes; unleſs it " be a religious of great importance: for it would be inde- " cent to put to the queſtion (except in caſe of an enormous " crime) a father who has in other reſpects deſerved well of the " order."

Laſtly, it is added, as above, cap. vi. ſect. 3. " The brother " who ſhall have recourſe to a ſecular tribunal, ſuch as that of a " biſhop, ſhall be puniſhed at the pleaſure of the general or pro- " vincial, and the brother who ſhall confeſs his ſin, or ſhall be " convicted of it, ſhall be puniſhed by form of proviſion, not- " withſtanding an appeal, except to do juſtice hereafter, in caſe " the appeal be well founded."

Such rules being laid down, there is no monk that the pope, the church, and the general, cannot make a regicide. There are no ſuperiors on whom a prince ought to confer ſuch power over his inferiors. By what infatuation can he thus expoſe innocence to the moſt cruel puniſhments, and himſelf to ſo many dangers.

21. (p. 175.) Among the works of the Jeſuits there are certainly many that are ridiculous and raſh. Father Garaſſe, for example, declaiming againſt Cain, ſays, lib. ii. p. 130. of his curious Doctrine, " That Cain, as the Hebrews remark, was a " man of little ſenſe, and the firſt atheiſt. That this Cain " could not comprehend what his father Adam ſaid, that is, " that there was a holy God, the judge of our actions. Not be- " ing able to underſtand this, Cain imagined it was an old " man's

" man's tale, and that his father had loſt his ſenſes, when he re-
" lated the fact of going out of the terreſtrial paradiſe, and what
" followed. From whence it came, that Cain put himſelf
" into a paſſion, killed his brother, and talked to God as if he
" had been talking to a blackguard."

The ſame father, lib. i. p. 97. " Relates, that on the arrival
" of Calvin, in Poitou, when almoſt all the nobility embraced
" his errors, a gentleman retained a part of the nobility in the
" Catholic faith, by ſaying, " I would undertake to eſtabliſh a
" better religion than that of Calvin, if I could find a dozen
" ſcoundrels, who were not afraid to be burned in defence of
" my notions." Fontenelle was perſecuted for having repeat-
ed in his oracles, what father Garaſſe made the gentleman of
Poitu, ſay, ſo true it is, that there is nothing but good luck and
bad luck in this world.

22. (p. 177.) All things, even the pedantic Janſeniſts, concur
in preventing the preſent education in France, from forming
citizens and patriots. Why therefore always occupied with
their verſatile or arrogant grace, have they not yet propoſed
any new plan of public education. With what indifference
do the ſanctified regard the intereſt of the public!

23. (ibid.) The book of Aſſertions, ſaid the partiſans of
the Jeſuits, was worthy of an Hibernian theologian, but not of
a parliament. The Jeſuits, they add, were therefore not judg-
ed by the magiſtrates, but by attorneys of the Janſeniſts. This
however I know, that the diſſolution of that ſociety was in part
owing to that book. So true it is, that the moſt happy refor-
mations are ſometimes brought about by the moſt ridiculous
means.

24. (ibid.) In almoſt every country, whoever would ob-
tain an employ, ſhould be of the religion of the people. China,
they ſay, is almoſt the only country where they ſee the abſur-
dity of this cuſtom. To be a juſt hiſtorian, a man ſhould, ſay
the Chineſe, be indifferent to all religions. To govern man-
kind in an equitable manner, to be a magiſtrate of integrity, a
mandarin void of prejudice, he muſt in like manner be of no
particular ſect.

25. (p. 178.) Pons de Thiard de Biſſy, biſhop of Chalons,
ſur Saone (the only one in the ſtates of Blois), in 1558, who
remained faithful to Henry III. addreſſed a letter to the parlia-
ment of Dijon. In this letter, dated in 1590, this prelate
firſt

firſt deplores the misfortunes of his rueful country; he deſcribed the horrors of the league, and its abominable crimes. He aſſerts that God in his wrath would deſtroy that fine kingdom, *which impoſtors in iron maſks had ſhook in every part.* Then addreſſing himſelf to the parliament, he thus extorts them to expel the Jeſuits:

" Theſe apoſtles of Mahomet, have, ſays he, the impiety to " preach, that war is the method of God; let theſe diabolical " ſeducers, theſe preſumptuous lovers of falſe wiſdom, theſe hy- " pocritical zealots, theſe whited walls, theſe incendiaries of " mens minds, theſe firebrands of ſedition, theſe emiſſaries of " Spain, theſe dangerous ſpies, and artful contrivers of am- " buſhes, be for ever baniſhed from France."

Then addreſſing himſelf to the Jeſuit Charles, and his brethren, he ſays, " You ſee all theſe execrable facts committed, " that make honeſt men groan, and you do not oppoſe them " by the leaſt ſign of improbation: you even do more, you ap- " plaud them, and promiſe celeſtial rewards to the greateſt " crimes. You excite men to commit them; and place in hea- " ven infamous villains, whom you waſh in the dew of your " mercy."

" The moſt Chriſtian king has been lately aſſaſſinated by the " atrocious act of your fellows, and you ſacrifice him again af- " ter his death. You aſſign him to eternal flames; and you " dare to preach, that we ought to refuſe him the aid of our " prayers."

26. (p. 180.) O! mortals, who call yourſelves good, and who have in fact ſo little goodneſs, will you never bluſh at your indifference, for the reformation and perfection of the laws! Do not the magiſtrates know how to govern and reſtrain you, but by the fear of the moſt abominable puniſhments? Inſenſible to the cries and groans of the ſufferers, will they never attempt to ſuppreſs crimes by more gentle methods? It is time that they prove their humanity, by inveſtigating other means. Let them therefore publiſh their reflections on this ſubject. Let them fear, leſt the murder of ſo many unfortunate men, ſhould be imputed to the idleneſs of their minds, and let them propoſe a premium for the ſolution of a problem, ſo worthy of the compaſſionate equity of a ſovereign. O! mortals, your pretended goodneſs is nothing but hypocriſy. It is in your words, and not in your actions.

SECTION VIII.

Of what conſtitutes the happineſs of individuals. Of the baſis on which we ſhould found national felicity, neceſſarily compoſed of the felicity of all the individuals.

CHAP. I.

Whether men, in the ſtate of ſociety, can be all equally happy?

THERE is no ſociety in which all the members can be equally rich and powerful (1). Is there any in which they can be equally happy? It is that we are to examine.

Sagacious laws may without doubt produce the prodigy of univerſal felicity. When every citizen has ſome property, is in a certain degree of eaſe, and can, by ſeven or eight hours labour, abundantly ſupply his own wants, and thoſe of his family; they are then all as happy as they can be.

To prove this truth, let us conſider in what the happineſs of an individual conſiſts. This preliminary knowledge is the ſole baſis on which we can eſtabliſh the national felicity.

A nation

A nation is the aſſemblage of all the inhabitants of a country, and the public happineſs is compoſed of that of all the individuals. Now, what is it conſtitutes the happineſs of an individual? Perhaps it is ſtill unknown, and men have not ſufficiently employed themſelves in the examination of a queſtion, which however may throw the greateſt lights on the ſeveral parts of adminiſtration.

If we aſk the majority of mankind, they will ſay, that to be equally happy, all ſhould be equally rich and powerful. Nothing more falſe than this aſſertion. In fact, if life be nothing more than an aggregate of an infinity of ſeparate inſtants, all men would be equally happy, if they could all fill up thoſe inſtants in a manner equally agreeable. Is that to be done in different ſituations? Is it poſſible to colour all the moments of human life with the ſame tint of felicity? To reſolve this queſtion, let us ſee in what different occupations the ſeveral parts of the day are neceſſarily conſumed.

CHAP. II.

Of the employment of time.

MEN hunger and thirſt; they require to lie with their wives, to ſleep, &c. Of the twenty-four hours of the day, they employ ten or twelve in providing for theſe ſeveral wants. As ſoon as they are gratified, from the dealer in rabbits ſkins, to the monarch, all are equally happy.

It is in vain to ſay that the table of wealth is more delicate than that of mediocrity. When the labourer is well fed, he is content. The different cookery of different people proves, as I have already ſaid, that good cheer is that to which we have been accuſtomed * †.

* This ſaying brings to my mind that of a French cook. He was in England, where he ſaw every thing dreſſed with butter ſauce. What! ſays he, in this country where they count a hundred different religions, have they only one ſauce for all their meats? France for me; there we have only one religion, but in return there is no meat that we do not eat with a hundred different ſorts of ſauce.

† *Hear Bethel's ſermons, one not vers'd in ſchools,*
But ſtrong in ſenſe, and wiſe without the rules.
Go work, hunt, exerciſe, (he thus began),
Then ſcorn a homely dinner, if you can;
If their plain bread and milk will do the feat,
The pleaſure lies in you, and not the meat.
Pope's Imitation of Horace.

There

There are then ten or twelve hours in the day, in which all men, able to procure the neceſſaries of life, may be equally happy. With regard to the ten or twelve remaining hours, that is to ſay, thoſe that ſeparate * a riſing want from one that is gratified, who can doubt that men do not then enjoy the ſame felicity, if they commonly make the ſame uſe of them, and if all devote them to labour, that is, in the acquiſition of money ſufficient to ſupply their wants? Now the poſtillion who rides, the carter who drives, and the clerk who engroſſes, all in their ſeveral ranks propoſe the ſame end; they muſt therefore, in this ſenſe, employ their time in the ſame manner.

But, it will be ſaid, is it the ſame with the opulent idler? His riches furniſh him, without labour, with all he wants. I allow it. But is he therefore more happy? No. Nature does not multiply in his favour the wants of hunger, love, &c. But does not the opulent man fill up in a manner more agreeable the interval that ſeparates a gratified want from one that is riſing? I doubt it.

The artiſan is doubtleſs ſubject to labour, and ſo is the idle opulent to diſcontent: and which of theſe two evils is the greateſt?

* It is in fact, on the more or leſs happy employment of theſe ten or twelve hours, that principally depend the happineſs or miſery of the greateſt part of mankind.

If labour be generally regarded as an evil, it is becauſe in moſt governments the neceſſaries of life are not to be had without exceſſive labour; from whence the very idea of labour conſtantly excites that of pain.

Labour, however, is not pain in itſelf. Habit renders it eaſy; and when it is purſued without remarkable fatigue, is in itſelf an advantage. How many artiſans are there who when rich ſtill continue their occupations, and quit them not without regret, when age obliges them to it. There is nothing that habit does not render agreeable.

In the exerciſe of their employments, their profeſſions, their talents, the magiſtrate who judges, the ſmith who forges, and the meſſenger who runs, the poet and muſician who compoſe, all taſte nearly the ſame pleaſure, and in their ſeveral occupations equally find means to avoid that natural evil diſcontent.

The buſy man is the happy man. To prove this, I diſtinguiſh two ſorts of pleaſures. The one are *the pleaſures of the ſenſes*. Theſe are founded on corporeal wants, are enjoyed by all conditions of men, and at the time of enjoyment all are equally happy. But theſe pleaſures are of ſhort duration.

The others are *the pleaſures of expectation*. Among theſe I reckon all the means of procuring corporeal pleaſures; theſe means are by expecta-

tion

tion always converted into real pleaſures. When a joiner takes up his plane, what does he experience? All the pleaſures of expectation annexed to the payment for his work. Now theſe pleaſures are not experienced by the opulent man, who finds in his money, without labour, an exchange for all the objects of his deſires. He has nothing to do to procure them, and is ſo much the more ſubject to diſcontent. He is therefore always uneaſy, always in motion, continually rolling about in his carriage, like the ſquirrel in his cage, to get rid of his diſguſt.

To be happy, the idle opulent is forced to wait, till nature excites in him ſome freſh deſire. It is therefore the diſguſt of idleneſs, that in him fills up the interval between a gratified and a riſing want. But in the artiſan it is labour, which affording him the means of providing for his wants, and his amuſements, becomes thereby agreeable.

The wealthy idler experiences a thouſand inſtances of diſcontent, while the labouring man enjoys the continual pleaſure of freſh expectations.

Labour, when it is moderate, is in general the moſt happy method of employing our time, when we have no want to gratify, and do not enjoy any of the pleaſures of the ſenſes, of all others doubtleſs the moſt poignant, and leaſt durable.

How many agreeable ſenſations are unknown to him whom no want obliges to think! Do my

immenſe riches ſecure me all the pleaſures that the poor deſire but cannot obtain without much labour? I give myſelf up to indolence. I wait, as I juſt now ſaid, with impatience, till nature ſhall awake in me ſome new deſire; and while I wait, am diſcontented and unhappy. It is not ſo with the man of buſineſs. When the idea of labour, and of the money with which it is requited, are aſſociated in the memory with the idea of happineſs, the labour itſelf becomes a pleaſure. Each ſtroke of the axe brings to the workman's mind the pleaſure that the money he is to receive for his day's labour will procure him.

In general, every uſeful occupation fills up, in the moſt agreeable manner, the interval that ſeparates a gratified from a riſing want; that is, the ten or twelve hours of the day, when we moſt envy the indolence of the rich, and think they enjoy ſuperior happineſs.

The pleaſure with which the carter puts his team to the cart, and the tradeſman opens his cheſt, and his journal, is a proof of this truth.

Employment gives pleaſure to every moment, but is unknown to the great and idle opulent. The meaſure of our wealth, whatever prejudice may think, is not therefore the meaſure of our happineſs. Conſequently, in every condition, where, as I have ſaid, a man can, by moderate labour, provide for all his wants, is above indigence, and

not

not expoſed to the diſcontent of the idly rich, he is nearly as happy as he can be.

Men, therefore, without being, equal in riches and power, may be equal in happineſs. Whence comes it, then, that kingdoms are peopled with none but the unfortunate?

CHAP. III.

Of the cauſes of the unhappineſs of almoſt all nations.

THE almoſt univerſal unhappineſs of man, and of nations, ariſes from the imperfections of their laws, and the too unequal partition of their riches. There are in moſt kingdoms only two claſſes of citizens, one of which want neceſſaries, and the other riot in ſuperfluities.

The former cannot gratify their wants but by an exceſſive labour: ſuch labour is a natural evil for all; and to ſome it is a puniſhment.

The ſecond claſs live in abundance, but at the ſame time in the anguiſh of diſcontent*. Now

* To how many evils, beſide that of diſcontent, are the rich expoſed? How many cares and anxieties to increaſe and preſerve a great fortune? What is a rich man? The intendant of a great houſe, charged with the cloathing and feeding a number of valets that attend him.

If his domeſtics have ſecured a ſubſiſtence for their old age, and do not participate the diſguſt of their maſter's idleneſs, they are a thouſand times more happy.

The

diſcontent is an evil almoſt as much to be dreaded as indigence.

Moſt nations, therefore, muſt be peopled by the unfortunate. What ſhould be done to make them happy? Diminiſh the riches of ſome; augment that of others; put the poor in ſuch a ſtate of eaſe, that they may by ſeven or eight hours labour abundantly provide for the wants of themſelves and their families. It is then, that a people will become as happy as they can be.

They then enjoy, with regard to corporeal pleaſures, all that the rich enjoy. The appetite of the poor is by nature the ſame as that of the rich; and to uſe a trite proverb, *The rich cannot dine twice.* I know there are coſtly pleaſures out of the reach of mere competency. But theſe may be always replaced by others, and the time between gratifying one want and the riſing of another, that is between one repaſt and another, or one enjoyment and another, may be filled up in a manner equally agreeable. In every wiſe government men may enjoy an equal felicity, as well in the moments when they gratify their wants, as in thoſe that ſeparate one want from another. Now if life be nothing more than an aggregate of two ſorts of periods, the man at his eaſe, as I propoſed

The happineſs of a rich man is a complicated machine, ſome parts of which are always out of order. To be conſtantly happy, we muſt be ſo without much expence.

to

to prove, may then equal in happineſs the moſt rich and moſt powerful.

But is it poſſible for good laws to put all the people in the ſtate of eaſe requiſite for the acquiring of happineſs? It is to that fact this important queſtion is now reduced.

CHAP. IV.

That it is poſſible to ſet the people more at their eaſe.

IN the preſent ſtate of moſt nations, if government, ſtruck with the too great diſproportions in the fortunes of the people, were deſirous of making them more equal, it would doubtleſs have a thouſand obſtacles to ſurmount. Such a project, ſagaciouſly conceived, could not, and ought not to be executed, but by continual and inſenſible alterations; theſe alterations however are poſſible.

If the laws ſhould aſſign ſome property to every individual, they would ſnatch the poor from the horror of indigence, and the rich from the miſery of diſcontent; and render them both more happy.

But ſuppoſing theſe laws to be eſtabliſhed, would men, without being equally rich and powerful *, think themſelves equally happy? There

* If I have contracted a great number of wants, it is in vain you would perſuade me that a ſmall fortune is ſufficient to procure me felicity. If I have from my infancy united in my memory the idea of wealth with that of happineſs, by what means ſhall

is nothing more difficult to perſuade them on the preſent plan of education. Why? Becauſe from their infancy they have been accuſtomed to aſſociate in their minds the idea of riches with that of happineſs; and in almoſt all countries that notion is engraved the deeper in their memories, as they cannot obtain ſufficient to ſupply their preſſing and daily wants, without exceſſive labour.

Would it be ſo in countries governed by ſagacious laws?

If the ſavage regards gold and dignities with the higheſt contempt, the idea of extreme wealth cannot be neceſſarily connected with that of extreme happineſs. We may therefore form diſtinct and different ideas of them, and prove to mankind, that in the ſeries of inſtants which compoſe their lives, all may be equally happy; if by the form of government to a ſtate of eaſe, they can join the ſecurity of their proper-

ſhall I ſeparate them at an advanced age? Can any one be ignorant of the power that the aſſociation of certain ideas have over us?

If, from the form of government, I have all to fear from the great, I ſhall reſpect grandeur mechanically, even in the nobleman who is a foreigner, and can have no power over me. If I aſſociate in my mind the idea of virtue with that of happineſs, I ſhall cultivate it, even when it ſhall be the object of perſecution. I know very well theſe two ideas will at laſt ſeparate, but it will be a work of time, and even a long time. To produce this effect, it is neceſſary that experiments have a hundred times convinced me, that virtue does not really procure any of the advantages I expected. It is in a deep meditation on this fact, that we find the ſolution of an infinity of moral problems, that are inſoluble without a knowledge of this aſſociation of ideas.

ty,

ty, lives, and liberty. It is the want of good laws, that every where allumines the desire of great riches.

CHAP. V.

Of the excessive desire of riches.

I SHALL not examine in this chapter, if the love of money be the principle of action in most nations, and if in present governments this passion be not a necessary evil. I shall only consider it as relative to the influence it has on the happiness of individuals.

I shall only observe, that there are countries where the desire of enormous wealth becomes natural. Such are those countries where taxes are arbitrary, and consequently possessions uncertain, and where a reverse of fortune is frequent; as in the East, for there a prince can seize on the property of his subjects with impunity.

In those countries, if men covet great riches, it is because always exposed to loss, they hope to save from a large fortune so much at least as shall be sufficient to subsist them and their families. Wherever the law has not sufficient force to protect the weak against the strong, opulence may be considered as a mean of avoiding injustice, the persecutions of power, and that contempt which is the constant companion of the weak. A great fortune is therefore desired as a safeguard against oppressors.

But in a country where a man is ſecure in his property, his life, and his liberty, where the people live in a certain ſtate of eaſe, the only one who can reaſonably deſire immenſe wealth, muſt be the idly rich; he alone, in ſuch a country, can think it neceſſary to his happineſs; for his happineſs conſiſts in fantaſtic pleaſures, and to fantaſtic pleaſures there are no bounds*. To attempt to gratify them, is to fill the veſſels of the Danaides.

In all countries where the people have no part in the government, and every emulation is extinguiſhed, whoever is above want, is without motive for ſtudy and inſtruction; his mind is void of ideas; he is abſorbed in diſcontent; he would fly from it, but cannot. Without reſource from within, it is from without he expects his felicity. Too idle to go to meet pleaſure, he would have pleaſure come to him. Now pleaſure oft times makes men wait, and it is for this reaſon the rich are frequently and neceſſarily unhappy †.

* There are countries where pomp and caprice make a part of the wants, not only of the great, but the opulent alſo. Nothing is more abſurd than what they call decent luxury; and yet it is not luxury by which they are ruined. If we look into their books of accounts, we ſhall ſee that their houſe-expences are not the moſt conſiderable, that the greateſt part conſiſts of capricious articles, jewels, &c. Wants of this ſort, and their love of money, muſt be equally unlimited.

† *Thee too, my Paridel, ſhe mark'd thee there,*
Stretch'd on the rack of a too eaſy chair;
And heard thy everlaſting yawn confeſs,
The pains and penalties of idleneſs.

POPE.

Does

Does my felicity depend on another? Am I paſſive in my amuſements? Can I not diveſt myſelf of diſquietude? What is to be done? A ſplendid table is of ſmall import, I muſt alſo have horſes, dogs, equipages, concerts, painters, pompous entertainments. There is no treaſure can anſwer my expence.

A ſmall fortune will ſuffice a buſy man (2). The largeſt will not ſupply him that has no employ. A hundred villages muſt be laid waſte to amuſe an idle wretch. The greateſt princes have not ſufficient riches to ſatisfy the avidity of a woman, a courtier, or a prelate. It is not the poor but the idly rich who feels moſt forcibly the want of immenſe riches. For which reaſon, how many nations are loaded with taxes and ruined: how many citizens are deprived of neceſſaries, merely to ſupport the expence of a few diſcontented mortals! When riches have ſtupified the thinking faculty in man, he gives himſelf up to idleneſs. He feels at once a pain in moving himſelf, and an uneaſineſs from not being moved. He would be moved without the trouble of motion. What riches can procure ſuch a whimſical exerciſe.

O ye indigents, you are not certainly the moſt miſerable of mortals! To alleviate your ſufferings, behold the idly opulent, who, paſſive in almoſt all their amuſements, cannot diveſt themſelves of diſcontent but by ſenſations too poignant to be frequent.

If I ſhould be ſuſpected of exaggerating the miſery of the idly rich, let any one examine minutely what is done by moſt of the great and wealthy to avoid diſcontent, and he will be convinced that the malady is as cruel as it is common.

CHAP. VI.

Of diſquietude.

DIſquietude is a diſorder of the mind. From whence does it proceed? From the abſence of ſenſations ſufficiently acute to engage attention *.

If a moderate fortune compels us to labour, and we contract the habit of it; or if we purſue glory in the career of the arts and ſciences, we ſhall not be expoſed to diſquietude: for it commonly attacks none but the idly rich.

* Weak ſenſations will not ſave us from diſquietude; among theſe I place ſuch as are habitual. I wake at the break of day; I am ſtruck by the ſun's rays reflected from every object that ſurrounds me; by the crowing of the cock, by the murmur of waters, and by the bleating of ſheep, and am diſcontent. Why? Becauſe theſe ſenſations are too habitual to make any ſtrong impreſſions on me.

CHAP. VII.

Of the means invented by the idle to avoid diſquietude.

IN France, for example, a thouſand ſocial devoirs unknown to other nations, have been invented by diſquietude. A lady marries and has a child. A female idler hears of it; ſhe enjoins herſelf ſo many viſits; goes every day to the door of the accouchée (or lying-in lady), ſpeaks to the Swiſs, gets into her coach again, and goes ſomewhere elſe, to get rid of her remaining uneaſineſs.

An idler moreover enjoins herſelf every day the writing of ſo many billets and letters of compliment, which are wrote and read with equal diſguſt.

The idle man would every inſtant feel ſtrong ſenſations; they alone can ſave him from diſcontent. For want of thoſe, he graſps at ſuch as are within his reach. He is alone; he lights his fire; a fire is company. It is to procure a continual ſucceſſion of new ſenſations, that the Turk and the Perſian chew perpetually, the one opium and the other betle.

When an Indian is diſcontent, he ſets himſelf by the ſide of a river, and fixes his eyes on the

ſtream. In France, the rich, for the ſame reaſon lodge dearly on the Quay des Theatins, where they ſee the boats paſs, and feel from time to time ſome new ſenſations. This is a tribute of five or ſix hundred crowns, that the idler pays every year to diſquietude; and which, if he were a man of buſineſs, he might diſtribute among the indigent. Now if the great and the rich are ſo frequently and forcibly attacked by this malady of diſcontent, there is no doubt but it muſt have a ſtrong influence on the manners of a nation.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the influence of diſquietude on the manners of a nation.

UNDER a government where the rich and the great have no management of public affairs, where, as in Portugal, ſuperſtition forbids them to think, what have the opulent idlers to do? To love. The attention that a miſtreſs requires can alone fill up, in a lively manner, the interval between a gratified and a riſing want. But that a miſtreſs become an occupation, it is neceſſary that the lover be continually ſurrounded by perils, that a vigilant jealouſy perpetually oppoſing his deſires, he may be continually employed in evading it *.

* What jealouſy performs in this reſpect in Portugal, the law performed in Sparta. Lycurgus ordered that the huſband ſhould live

Love and jealouſy are therefore in Pertugal * the only remedies againſt diſquietude. Now what influence may not ſuch remedies have on national manners? It is to diſquietude that Italy in like manner owes the invention of Ciciſbeos.

live ſeparate from the wife, and ſee her only by ſtealth, and in private places. He knew that the difficulty of a rencounter would augment deſire, draw the conjugal bond cloſer, and keep the two parties in an activity that would preſerve them from diſguſt.

* There is no jealouſy more violent, more cruel, and at the ſame time more laſcivious than that of the Eaſtern women. I ſhall quote on this occaſion a tranſlation from a Perſian poet. A ſultana ordered a young ſlave ſhe loved, and of whom ſhe was jealous, to be ſtripped before her. As he lay extended at her feet, ſhe threw herſelf upon him. " It is in ſpite of myſelf, " ſhe ſaid, that I again enjoy thy beauty. But I do enjoy it. " Already do thy eyes ſwim in tears of pleaſure; thou gapeſt; " thou dieſt. Is it for the laſt time that I claſp thee to my " boſom. The exceſs of intoxication blots out thy infidelity " from my memory. I am all ſenſation. All the faculties of " my ſoul abandon me, and are abſorbed in pleaſure. I am " pleaſure itſelf.

" But what ideas ſucceed to this delicious dream. Ha! ſhalt " thou be enjoyed by my rival! No! this body ſhall not paſs " to her arms without at leaſt diſfigurement. Who ſhall reſtrain " me? Thou art naked and defenceleſs. Shall thy beauties " diſarm me? I bluſh at the luxurious pleaſure with which I " behold the roundneſs of thy limbs. But my fury is come " again! Love nor pleaſure no longer inſpire me. Vengeance " and jealouſy ſhall tear thee with ſcourges. Fear ſhall drive " thee far from my rival, and bring thee back to me.

" Thy poſſeſſion at this price doubtleſs does not flatter my " vanity, or my ſentiments; no matter, it will flatter my ſenſa- " tions.

" My rival ſhall die far from thee, and I will die in thy " arms."

Diſcontent doubtleſs had a part in the inſtitution of chivalry. Thoſe ancient and renowned knights cultivated neither arts nor ſciences. The cuſtom of the times would not permit them to acquire learning, nor their birth an application to commerce. What then could a knight do? Love. But if at the moment he declared his paſſion, his miſtreſs had, according to modern practice, received his hand, and crowned his affection, they would have married, got children, and that would have been all. Now a child is ſoon got; and the huſband and wife would have lived in diſcontent for the remainder of their days.

But to preſerve their deſires in full vigour, to find employment for their youth, and to avoid diſguſt, the knight and his miſtreſs engaged themſelves by a tacit, but inviolable convention, the one to attack, and the other to reſiſt for ſo long a time. Love by this mean became an occupation, and was a real one for the knight.

Always in action near to his well-beloved, the lover to ſucceed was obliged to ſhow himſelf paſſionate in his addreſs, and valiant in the combat. He was to preſent himſelf at the tournament, where he muſt be nobly mounted, gallantly armed, and handle his lance with vigour and dexterity. The knight paſſed his youth in theſe exerciſes, and after ſpending much time in ſuch occupations, they married, and the nuptial benediction given, the romance was at an end.

Perhaps

Perhaps in their old age thoſe worthy knights were like ſome of our modern old warriors, diſguſting and diſguſted, boaſters and bigots.

To be happy, is it neceſſary that our deſires be accompliſhed as ſoon as conceived? No: pleaſure will be purſued for ſome time. If in the morning I enjoy a fine woman, what ſhall I do the reſt of the day? All appears diſguſtful. If I cannot ſee her till night, the torch of hope and pleaſure brightens every moment of the day. A young man would have a ſeraglio. If he could obtain it, he would ſoon be exhauſted with pleaſure, and paſs the remainder of his days in diſguſt. See, I would ſay to him, the abſurdity of thy demand. Behold thoſe princes, thoſe men of enormous wealth and power, they poſſeſs all that thou envieſt; what mortals are more diſcontented! If they enjoy all with indifference, it is becauſe they enjoy it without want.

What different pleaſure do two men feel in the foreſt, where one hunts for amuſement, and the other to maintain his family? When the latter arrives at his hut loaded with game, his wife and his children run to meet him. Their viſages are filled with tranſport, and he enjoys all that gives them pleaſure.

Want is the principle of activity and happineſs in man. To be happy he muſt have deſires and gratify them with ſome pains; but the pains taken, he muſt be ſure to enjoy the pleaſure.

CHAP. IX.

Of the more or leſs difficult acquiſition of pleaſures, according to the government under which we live, and the poſt we occupy.

I SHALL take the pleaſure of women for an example. In England, love is not an occupation but a pleaſure. A nobleman or wealthy citizen is employed in the upper or lower houſe of parliament with the affairs of the nation, or at home with his commerce. His diſpatches or his letters ſent away, he goes to a fine girl to divert himſelf and not to ſigh. What would a ciciſbeo have to do at London? Nearly the ſame as at Sparta or at ancient Rome.

If in France even a miniſter have miſtreſſes, no one is diſſatisfied. But if he diſſipate his time with them, he is derided. They are well content that he divert himſelf, but not that he ſigh. The ladies are therefore expected to have regard to the troubleſome ſituation of a miniſter, and not to embarraſs him with difficulties. Perhaps they are not to be reproached on this account. They are ſufficiently patriotic to ſave him even the trouble of a declaration, and are ſenſible that it is always in proportion to the diſengagement of a lover that they ought to adapt their reſiſtance.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

What ſort of miſtreſs is proper for an idler.

LITTLE account is now made of Platonic love, the corporeal affection is preferred, and this in fact is not the leaſt poignant. When the ſtag is inflamed by this laſt love, from timid he becomes brave. The faithful dog quits his maſter to follow his favourite female; if he be ſeparated from her, he neglects his food, he trembles in every limb, and ſends forth hideous howlings. Can Platonic love do more? No: I declare therefore for corporeal love. M. Buffon does the ſame, and like him I think that of all loves it is the moſt agreable, except however for the idler; for him the coquette is the delicious miſtreſs. When ſhe enters an aſſembly adorned in that gallant manner, that gives all room to hope for what ſhe grants but to very few, the idler is rouſed; his jealouſy is enflamed; his diſcontent vaniſhes *. A coquette therefore is the miſtreſs for an idler, and a fine girl for a man of buſineſs.

* The ruling paſſion of a coquette is to be adored. For which purpoſe ſhe conſtantly excites the deſire of men, and ſcarce ever gratifies them. A woman, ſays the proverb, is a table well ſerved, that we view with a different eye before and after the repaſt.

The chaſe after a woman, like that of game, ſhould be different according to the time we have to employ in it. When we have only an hour or two, we go out with a gun; when we have more time than we know how to employ, and wiſh for long exerciſe, we ſet the dogs to rouſe the game. A woman of addreſs will afford the idler a long chaſe.

In Canada, the courtſhip of the Indian is conciſe. He has not time for a regular addreſs. He muſt hunt and fiſh. He therefore offers the match to his miſtreſs; does ſhe blow it? he is happy. If we were to deſcribe the loves of Marius and Cæſar while their thoughts were occupied by Sylla and Pompey, either the ſtory would be improbable, or like that of the Indian it would be very conciſe. Cæſar ſhould then repeat, I came, I ſaw, I conquered.

If on the contrary we ſhould deſcribe the rural loves of idle ſhepherds, we ought to give them miſtreſſes delicate, cruel, and above all prodigiouſly baſhful. Without ſuch a miſtreſs Celadon would die of diſguſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Of the different ſorts of romances, and of love in the idle and buſy man.

WOMEN in different ages have been allured by different baits, and from hence the various deſcriptions we have of love. The ſubject however is always the ſame, that is, the union of a man with a woman. When the writer has put them both in one bed, the romance is finiſhed.

If thoſe ſorts of works differ from each other, it is only in the variety of means employed by the hero in order to make his miſtreſs agree to this rather vulgar expreſſion, *I want to lie with you* *.

The ſtyle of the romance changes according to the age and government under which the writer lives, and the degree of idleneſs he gives his hero. In a buſy nation love is regarded as of little importance. It is inconſtant, and as fading as the roſe. While the lover is at his firſt ſolicitations, and receives the firſt favours, it is the roſe in bud. At the firſt pleaſures the bud opens, and diſcovers the blowing roſe. By repeated pleaſures

* When the hero of a comedy or a tragedy is in love, they both make the ſame demand, the only difference is in the manner of expreſſing it.

it becomes full blown. When it has attained all its beauty, it begins to wither, the leaves drop off, and it dies to flouriſh again the following year; love in like manner withers to bloom again with a new miſtreſs.

Among an idle people, love becomes an affair of importance, and is more conſtant.

What cannot diſcontent and idleneſs operate on the manners of men. If among people of faſhion, ſays Rochefoucault, there be no happy marriages, it is becauſe in France, a rich woman does not know how to paſs her time. Diſcontent purſues her. She would fly from it; takes a huſband and contracts debts. The huſband raves; ſhe will not hear him. They irritate and deteſt each other, becauſe they are idle, diſcontented, and unhappy (3). It is otherwiſe with the wife of a labourer or plowman. In this ſtate, the huſband and wife love each other, becauſe they are employed and mutually uſeful to each other. The wife watches over her domeſtic affairs, and nouriſhes her children, while the huſband labours in the field.

Idleneſs is often the mother of vice, and always of diſcontent. It is even in religion that a remedy is ſought againſt this diſcontent.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Of religion and its ceremonies, conſidered as a remedy againſt diſquietude

IN India, where the land produces without culture more than ſufficient for the wants of an idle people, what, ſays a learned Engliſhman, can preſerve them from diſcontent, but religion and its numerous rites. So that purity of ſoul requires there ſo many ſuperſtitious rites and ceremonies, that there is no Indian, how careful ſoever he may be, that does not commit every inſtant ſome crime by which God will be iritated, till the prieſts, enriched by the offerings of the ſinner, are appeaſed and ſatisfied. The life of an Indian is in conſequence nothing more than a perpetual purification, ablution, and penitence.

In Europe when women attain a certain age, and leave off paint, gallants, and frequenting the theatres, they ſink into an inſupportable diſcontent. What is to be done. They muſt ſubſtitute new occupations in the place of the old, become devout, and enjoin themſelves a number of pious duties. Go every day to maſs, to veſpers, to a ſermon, to viſit their confeſſor, and ſuffer faſtings. We like better to be lean than diſcontented. But at what age does this metamorphoſis take place? Commonly about forty-

forty-five or fifty. This is the time when women begin to see the devil: their prejudices then represent him to their minds in a lively manner.

It is with prejudices as with the flower de luce*, the mark is sometimes visible, but the confessor and executioner easily make them re-appear. Now if mankind seek, even in a puerile devotion the means of escaping from disquietude, that malady must be very common and very cruel. What remedy can be found for it? None that is efficacious; palliatives only can be here applied; among these the arts of amenity are the most powerful, and it doubtless arises from discontent that they are improved.

It has been said of chance, that it is the common parent of all discoveries. Now, if corporeal wants may, after chance, be regarded as the inventors of the useful arts, the want of amusement ought to be regarded, in like manner, after the same chance, as the inventor of the arts of amenity.

Their object is to excite in us such sensations as will preserve us from discontent. Now, such sensations are the more efficacious in proportion as they are strong and distinct.

The object of these arts is to affect, and the several rules of poetry and eloquence, are nothing more than the means of producing affecting sensations.

* *French criminals are sometimes branded with a flower de luce.*

To

To affect is the principle, and the precepts of rhetoric are its amplifications or conſequences. It is becauſe the rhetoricians have not equally perceived the full extent of this idea, that I ſhall take the liberty of pointing out its ſource.

My ſubject authoriſes this examen. It is by a knowledge of the remedies applied againſt diſcontent, that we become the better acquainted with its nature.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the arts of amenity, and of thoſe of this kind that are called the fine arts.

THE object of theſe arts, as I have already ſaid, is to pleaſe, and conſequently to excite in us ſuch ſenſations, as without being painful are ſtrong and lively. When a work produces this effect it meets with applauſe *.

* In the pleaſing art, the more lively a ſenſation is, the more beautiful the object that produces it is eſteemed. On the contrary, the more ſtrong a diſagreable ſenſation is, the more ugly or frightful the object is thought by which it is produced. When we judge from our own ſenſations, that is, for ourſelves, our judgments are always juſt. When we judge from prejudices, that is, after others, our judgments are always falſe; and theſe are our moſt common judgments.

I open a modern book: the impreſſions it makes on me are more agreable than thoſe of an ancient author: I even read the latter with diſguſt: no matter; it is the ancient I extol. Why?

The beautiful is that which ſtrikes us forcibly, and by the expreſſion, *a knowledge of the beautiful*, is meant the means of exciting in us ſenſations which are the more agreable in proportion as they are more new and diſtinct.

It is to the means of producing this effect that all the various rules of poetry and eloquence may be reduced.

If we ſeek for novelty in the work of an artiſt, it is becauſe novelty produces a ſenſation of ſurprize, a lively commotion. If we would have an author think for himſelf, and deſpiſe him who copies after others, it is becauſe works of that kind preſent to our minds ſuch ideas only as are too trite to make ſtrong impreſſions on us.

Why do we require of the writers of romance and tragedies, characters extraordinary, and ſituations new? From a deſire of being affected: and ſuch ſituations and characters are neceſſary to excite in us lively ſenſations.

Habit dulls the vivacity of an impreſſion. I ſee with indifference what I always ſee, and even the beautiful ceaſes to be ſo to me. I have ſo often regarded the ſun, that ſea, this landſcape, and fine woman, that to excite my attention or

Why? Becauſe the generations of mankind are the echoes of each other; and we eſteem from the report of others, even thoſe very works that gives us diſguſt.

Envy, moreover, forbids us to admire a cotemporary, and envy influences almoſt all our judgments. To humble the living how many eulogies are laviſhed on the dead.

admiration,

admiration, the ſun muſt paint the heavens with colours more lively than common, the ſea muſt be ravaged by ſtorms, the landſcape muſt appear with uncommon luſtre, and the woman preſent herſelf to me under a new form.

The continuance of the ſame ſenſations renders them at length inſenſible to us, and from hence that inconſtancy and love of novelty, common to all men; for all would be affected in a ſtrong and lively manner *.

If all objects ſtrongly affect youth, it is becauſe all objects are new. With regard to compoſitions, if the taſte of youth be leſs judicious than that of maturer age, it is becauſe that age has leſs ſenſibility, and the correctneſs of taſte ſuppoſes, perhaps, a certain difficulty in being moved. But man will be affected. It is not ſufficient that the plan of a work be new, we require, if it be poſſible, that all the circumſtances of it be new likewiſe. The reader would have every verſe, every line, every word, excite a ſenſation in him. So Boileau ſays on this ſubject, in one of his epiſtles; if his verſes pleaſe, it is not becauſe they are all equally correct, elegant, and harmonious:

Mais mon vers bien ou mal, dit toujours quelque choſe.

* The work the moſt deſpiſed, is not the work that has moſt faults, but that void of beauties; it falls from the hands of the reader, becauſe it does not excite any lively ſenſations in him.

But

But my verſe good or bad, ſtill has ſomething to ſay.

In fact the verſes of this poet contain almoſt always an idea or an image, and conſequently almoſt always excite a ſenſation in us. The more lively the ſenſation is, the more beautiful the verſe appears, and when it makes the ſtrongeſt impreſſion poſſible it becomes ſublime *.

It is therefore by the greater or leſs force that we diſtinguiſh the beautiful from the ſublime.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the ſublime.

THE only way to form an idea of the word *ſublime*, is to recollect the paſſages cited as ſuch by Longinus, Deſpreaux, and moſt of the rhetoricians.

What the impreſſions excited in us by thoſe paſſages have in common, is what conſtitutes the ſublime.

The better to underſtand the nature of the ſublime, I ſhall diſtinguiſh it into two ſorts, the one of imagery, the other of ſentiment.

* The more forcibly we are affected, the more happy we are; provided however the ſenſations be not painful. But in what ſtate do men feel the moſt of this ſort of ſenſations? Perhaps in that of a man of letters, or an artiſt. It is in the workſhops of the artiſts, perhaps, that we ſhould look for happy men.

Of

Of Sublime Images.

To what ſort of ſenſation do they give the name of ſublime?

To the ſtrongeſt, when it does not, as I have ſaid, produce pain.

What perception produces this ſenſation in us?

That of fear: fear is the daughter of pain; and makes us recollect the idea of it.

Why does this idea make the ſtrongeſt impreſſion on us? Becauſe an exceſs of pain excites in us a more lively ſenſation than an exceſs of pleaſure, for there is no pleaſure that produces a poignancy of ſenſation comparable to the torture felt by a Ravaillac or a Damien. Of all paſſions fear is the ſtrongeſt: therefore the ſublime is always the effect of the ſenſation of a terror commenced.

But do facts agree with this opinion? To be certain of this let us examine among the ſeveral objects of nature, which thoſe are that appear to us ſublime.

They are the immenſity of the heavens, the profundity of the ſea, the eruptions of volcanos, &c.

From whence ariſes that ſtriking impreſſion thoſe great objects excite in us? From the great force they declare to be in nature, and from the involuntary compariſon we make between that force and our own weakneſs. At that view we feel our-

ſelves ſeized with a certain reſpect which always ſuppoſes in us a ſenſation of a fear or terror commenced.

For what reaſon, in fact, do we give the name of Sublime to the picture in which Julio Romano repreſents the combat of the Giants, and refuſe it to that in which Albani has painted the ſports of the Loves? Is it more eaſy to paint a Grace than a Giant, or to colour the picture of the toilet of Venus, than that of the field of battle of the Titans? No: but when Albani tranſports me to the toilet of the goddeſs, nothing excites in me the ſentiment of reſpect and terror. I ſee none but pleaſing objects, and conſequently give the name of Agreeable to the impreſſions they make on me.

On the contrary, when Julio Romano tranſports me to the ſpot where the ſons of earth heap up Oſſa on Pelion; ſtruck with the grandeur of the proſpect, I am neceſſarily led to compare my ſtrength with that of the giants; and convinced of my weakneſs, I feel a ſort of ſecret terror, and give the name of Sublime to the impreſſion of fear the picture makes on me.

In the tragedy of Eumenides by what art did Eſchylus and the decorators of the theatre make ſo lively an impreſſion on the Greeks? By preſenting them with a drama and decorations that were tremendous. Theſe impreſſions were perhaps

perhaps horrible to ſome, as they were extended even to pain. But the ſame impreſſions moderated, would have been generally acknowledged as ſublime.

The ſublime of imagery always ſuppoſes therefore *the ſenſation of a terror begun* *, and cannot be produced by any other ſenſation †.

When God ſaid, *Let there be light, and there light was*; this image is ſublime. What a ſtriking picture is that of the univerſe produced in an inſtant out of nothing by the light! But ſhould ſuch an image inſpire fear? Yes; becauſe it is neceſſarily aſſociated in our minds with the idea of the Creator of ſuch a prodigy; and being then ſeized in an involuntary manner, with a dread of the Author of light, we feel the ſenſation of a commencing terror.

Are all men equally ſtruck by this grand image? No: for it does not appear to all with equal force. As it is from what we know that we attain to what is unknown, to conceive all the grandeur of this image, we muſt repreſent to ourſelves that of a profound night, when the clouds heaped on each other redouble the darkneſs,

* To what ſort of tales do men, women, and children liſten with the moſt avidity? Thoſe of robberies and apparitions. Such ſtories terrify; they produce the ſenſation of a terror begun, and this ſenſation makes the ſtrongeſt impreſſion on them.

† If in general the Indians make more offerings to the wicked divinity than to the good, it is becauſe man has more fear of pain, than love of pleaſure.

when the lightning, enflamed by the winds, tear the clouds aſunder, and when by the repeated and tranſient flaſhes, the ſea, the plains, the foreſts, the groves, the mountains, and the whole univerſe, each inſtant vaniſh, and again appear.

If there be no man who is not affected by this proſpect, what muſt have been the ſenſations of him, who having no idea of light, ſaw it for the firſt time give form and colours to the univerſe! *. With what admiration muſt he have beheld the ſun, the producer of thoſe wonders, and with what an awful fear reflected on the Being who had created it!

Thoſe grand images that imply an immenſe force in nature are therefore alone ſublime; it is

* How beautiful ſoever this image may be in itſelf, I agree with Deſpreaux, that it ſtill owes a part of its beauty to the brevity of expreſſion. The more conciſe an expreſſion is, the more ſurprize an image excites. *God ſaid let there be light, and the light was.* All the meaning of the phraſe is explained in the laſt word *was* *. Now its pronounciation, almoſt as rapid as the effects of the light, preſents in an inſtant the greateſt picture the human mind can conceive.

If this image (ſays Deſpreaux on this ſubject) had been diffuſed into a long phraſe, ſuch as the following, "The ſovereign ruler of all things commanded the light to form itſelf, "and at the inſtant that marvellous work called light was "formed:" it is evident this great image would not have had the ſame effect on us. Why? Becauſe the brevity of expreſſion, by exciting in us a ſudden and unforſeen ſenſation, adds to the moſt aſtoniſhing impreſſion of the picture.

* *If this criticiſm be juſt, the Engliſh verſion, by putting the words in another order (let there be light and there was light) has partly deſtroyed the beauty of the expreſſion.*

they

they alone that inſpire us with ſentiments of awe, and conſequently of a commencing terror. Such are thoſe of Homer, when, to give a grand idea of the power of the Gods, he ſays

Far as a ſhepherd from ſome point on high,
O'er the wide main extends his boundleſs eye,
Thro' ſuch a ſpace of air, with thund'ring ſound,
At one long leap th' immortal courſers bound.

POPE.

And ſuch is this other image of the ſame poet:

Heav'n in loud thunders bids the trumpet ſound,
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground:
Deep in the diſmal regions of the dead
Th' infernal monarch rear'd his horrid head;
Leap'd from his throne, leſt Neptune's arm ſhould lay
His dark dominions open to the day,
And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,
Abhor'd by men, and dreadful ev'n to Gods.

POPE.

If the name of Sublime be given in like manner to the bold compoſitions of the adventurous Milton, it is becauſe his images, always grand, excite in us the ſame ſenſation.

In phyſics, grandeur implies great force, and great force commands our reſpect.

This is what conſtitutes the ſublime of this ſort.

Of the SUBLIMITY of SENTIMENT.

The *myſelf* of Medea, the *exclamation* of Ajax, the *let him die* of Corneille, the *oath of the ſeven chiefs* before Thebes, are unanimouſly cited by the rhetors as ſublime; and I conclude, that if in phyſics it conſiſts in grandeur and force of images, it is in morals to the grandeur and force of characters that we give in like manner the name of Sublime. It is not Thyrſus at the feet of his miſtreſs, but Scævola with his hand in the burning coals, that inſpires me with reſpect, always mixed with ſome degree of fear. Every great character will conſtantly produce the ſenſation of a terror commenced. When Nerina ſays to Medea,

Thy people hate thee; faithleſs is thy ſpouſe;
For thee, what reſt againſt ſo many foes?
Myſelf!

That word aſtoniſhes; it ſuppoſes in Medea ſo much confidence in the force of her art, and eſpecially in her character, that, ſtruck with her audacity, the hearer is at the word *myſelf* ſeized with a certain degree of reſpect and terror.

Such is the effect produced by the confidence Ajax has in his own ſtrength and courage, when he cries out,

Great God let darkneſs from our eyes be driv'n,
And fight againſt us by the light of heav'n *.

* *This may be very ſublime in Homer, but would be mere bombaſt in a modern writer.*

Such

Such confidence creates reſpect in the moſt intrepid.

The *let him die* of old Horace, excites the ſame impreſſion. A man in whom a paſſion for honour and for Rome is exalted to ſuch a degree as to diſregard the death of a ſon he loves, muſt command reſpect.

With regard to the oath of the ſeven chiefs before Thebes.

The ſeven, a warlike leader each in chief,
Stood round, and o'er the brazen ſhield they ſlew
A ſullen bull, then plunging deep their hands
Into the foaming gore, with oath invok'd
Mars, and Enuo, and blood-thirſting terror *.

Such an oath announced on the part of the chiefs a deſperate vengeance. But as this ven-

* *Perhaps ſome people may think the following paſſage in an Engliſh author, equally ſublime with any of the foregoing, and ſuperior to moſt of them:*

Look then abroad thro' nature, to the range
Of planets, ſuns, and adamantine ſpheres,
And ſpeak, O man! does this capacious ſcene
With half the kindling majeſty dilate
The ſtrong conception, as when Brutus roſe
Refulgent, from the ſtroke of Cæſar's fate,
Amid the croud of patriots; and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove,
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and ſhook his crimſon ſteel,
And bade the father of his country Hail!
For lo! the tyrant proſtrate in the duſt,
And Rome again is free!

AKENSIDE.

geance could not fall on the auditors, from whence arose the fear?

From the association of certain ideas.

That of terror is always associated in the mind with the idea of strength and power. They are united as the ideas of cause and effect.

Am I the favorite of a king or an enchanter? My tender respectful friendship is always mixed with some fear; and in the good they do me, I always perceive the evil they can do me.

Moreover, if the sentiment of pain, as I have said, be the most poignant, and if it be to the most poignant impression, when not too painful, that we give the name of Sublime, the sensation of the sublime, as experience proves, must always include a terror commenced.

It is in this manner that the sublime is most clearly distinguished from the beautiful.

Of the Sublime in Speculative Ideas.

Are there any philosophic ideas to which the rhetors give the name of Sublime? None. Why? Because the most general and fruitful ideas of this sort, are not conceived but by a small number of those who can rapidly perceive all their consequences.

Such thoughts may without doubt awaken a great number of sensations, produce a long chain of ideas, which seized as soon as presented,

may excite in us ſtrong impreſſions, but not of the ſort of thoſe to which we give the name of *ſublime*.

If there be no geometric axioms cited by the rhetoricians as Sublime, it is becauſe we cannot give that name to ideas, of which the ignorant, and conſequently the greateſt part of mankind, are inſenſible.

It is therefore evident,

1. That the beautiful is what makes on moſt men a ſtrong impreſſion.

2. That the ſublime makes a ſtill ſtronger impreſſion, that is always mixed with a certain ſenſation of awe or commencing terror.

3. That we meaſure the beauty of a work by the impreſſion more or leſs ſtrong it makes on us.

4. That all the rules of poetry laid down by the rhetors are nothing more than the ſeveral means of exciting in men ſenſations ſtrong or agreeable.

CHAP. XV.

Of the variety and ſimplicity requiſite in all works, and eſpecially in works of amenity.

WHY do we require ſo much variety in works of amenity? Becauſe, as la Mothe ſays, *diſguſt is the child of uniformity.* Senſations of the ſame nature ſoon ceaſe to make impreſſions

preſſions that are ſtrong and agreeable. There are no objects ſo beautiful as not to tire by a long contemplation. The ſun is beautiful, and yet the little girl in the Oracle crys out, *I have ſeen the ſun ſo often.* A fine woman is to a young lover an object ſtill more beautiful than the ſun: yet how many lovers cry out in like manner, *I have ſeen my miſtreſs ſo often* *.

An averſion to diſguſt, and a want of agreeable ſenſations, make us long inceſſantly for ſuch as are new. If we deſire in conſequence, variety in the detail, and ſimplicity in the plan, it is becauſe ſuch ideas are more complete, more diſtinct, and more proper to produce lively impreſſions.

Ideas dificult to comprehend, are never forcibly felt. When a picture is too crowded with figures, or the plan of a work too complicate, it excites in us only dull and faint ideas †. Such

* It is doubtleſs very agreeable, ſaid the preſident Hainault, to meet one's miſtreſs at the rendezvous; but when ſhe is not a new miſtreſs, it is much more agreable to go there and not meet her.

† The plan of Heraclius appeared at firſt too complicate to the polite world; it required too much of their attention. Boileau alludes to this tragedy in theſe verſes of his Art of Poetry.

Je me ris d'un auteur qui leut, a s'exprimer,
De ce qu'il vaut d'abord ne ſait pas m'informer,
Et qui debrouillant mal une penible intrigue,
D'un divertiſſement me fait une fatigue
J'armerois mieux encore qu'il declinat ſon nom, &c.

" I laugh

is the ſenſation felt at the ſight of one of thoſe Gothic temples that the architect has loaded with ſculpture: the eye, diſtracted and fatigued by the great number of ornaments, cannot fix itſelf without a painful effort.

Too many ſenſations at the ſame time create confuſion; their multiplicity deſtroys their effect. In buildings of the ſame extent, that is the moſt ſtriking of which the eye can eaſily ſurvey the whole together, and of which every part makes the moſt perfect and diſtinct impreſſion on the mind. The ſimple, noble, and majeſtic architecture of the Greeks is, for this reaſon, always preferred to the light, confuſed, and ill-proportioned buildings of the Goths.

If what I have here ſaid of architecture be applied to works of literature, it will be found that to produce a great effect, they muſt, in like manner, explain themſelves clearly, and conſtantly preſent diſtinct and complete ideas. For this reaſon an obſervance of the law of cuſtom in the ideas, the images, and the ſentiments, has been always expreſly enjoined by rhetoricians.

"I laugh at the author who is a long time in explaining himſelf, who does not know how to tell me his intention at once, but by badly unfolding an intricate plot, makes a fatigue of a diverſion. I had rather he would decline his name."

CHAP. XVI.

Of the law of cuſtom.

IDEA, image, ſentiment; in a book every part ſhould be prepared and finally concur.

An image falſe in itſelf diſguſts. If a painter ſhould draw a bed of roſes on the ſurface of the ſea, thoſe two incoherent and unnatural images would be diſpleaſing. The imagination would not know where to fix the roots of the roſes, nor conceive by what means the ſtalk was ſupported.

Even an image true in itſelf, ſtill diſpleaſes me when it is not in its proper place, when nothing conducts and prepares it. We do not ſufficiently recollect, that in good works almoſt all their beauties are local. I ſhall take for example a rapid ſucceſſion of true and different paintings. Such a ſucceſſion is in general agreeable, as exciting in us lively ſenſations. To produce this effect however, it muſt be ſkilfully prepared.

I love to paſs with Iſis, or the cow Io, from the burning climates of the torrid zone to thoſe dens, thoſe rocks of ice, on which the ſun obliquely ſhines. But the contraſt of thoſe images would not produce a lively impreſſion on me, if the poet, by declaring all the power of the jealouſy of Juno, had not already prepared me for the ſudden change of the picture.

Let

Let what I here ſay of images be applied to ſentiments. That they may make a ſtrong impreſſion on the theatre, they muſt be conducted and prepared with art. Thoſe with which a character is animated, muſt be ſuch as are peculiar to the poſition in which he is placed, and the paſſion with which he is poſſeſſed (4).

For want of an exact conformity between the poſition and ſentiments of a hero, the ſentiments become falſe; and the ſpectator not perceiving in him the ſource of thoſe ſentiments, feels a ſenſation the leſs lively as it is the more confuſed.

From ſentiment let us paſs to ideas. Have I a new truth to preſent to the world? That truth, almoſt always too difficult for the generality of men, is at firſt comprehended but by a ſmall number of them. If I would have it generally received, I muſt previouſly prepare their minds; I muſt lead them to it by degrees, and at laſt bring them to a point of view from whence they may diſtinctly behold it. But is it ſufficient to deduce this truth from a ſimple fact or principle? No: to the preciſion of the idea I muſt join the perſpicuity of expreſſion.

It is to this laſt quality of perſpicuity that almoſt all the rules of ſtyle relate.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Of the perſpicuity of ſtyle.

IT is not ſufficient that our ideas be clear and juſt. To communicate them to others we muſt know how to expreſs them with preciſion. Words are the repreſentative ſigns of our ideas. When the ſigns are obſcure, the ideas are ſo likewiſe; that is, when the ſignification of the words has not been preciſely determined.

In general, all that we call turns and happy expreſſions, are only thoſe turns and expreſſions that are moſt proper to expreſs our thoughts clearly. It is therefore to perſpicuity as I have ſaid, that almoſt all the rules of ſtyle may be reduced.

Why is ambiguity of expreſſion regarded as the principal fault in all writings? Becauſe ambiguity in the words extends to the ideas, renders them obſcure, and prevents that lively impreſſion they ſhould make on us.

If we require an author to be variagated in his ſtyle, and in the turn of his phraſes, it is becauſe uniform turns dull the attention; and the attention once rendered ſtupid, ideas and images offer themſelves leſs clearly to the mind, and produce but weak impreſſions.

Why

Why do we require conciſeneſs in ſtyle? Becauſe the ſhorteſt expreſſion, when it is proper, is always the cleareſt; and that we may conſtantly apply to ſtyle theſe verſes of Deſpreaux,

Tout ce qu'on dit de trop eſt fade & rebutant :
L'Eſprit raſſaſié le rejette a l'inſtant.

All that is ſaid too much is inſipid and diſguſtful; the ſatiated mind rejects it in an inſtant.

If purity and correctneſs be required in any work; it is becauſe they both aſſiſt in rendering it more perſpicuous.

Laſtly, why do we read with ſo much pleaſure thoſe writers who expreſs their ideas by brilliant images? Becauſe their ideas thereby become more ſtriking, more clear and diſtinct, in a word, more proper to make a lively impreſſion on us. It is therefore to perſpicuity alone that all the rules of ſtyle may be referred.

But do men annex the ſame idea to the word *ſtyle?* This word may be taken in two different ſenſes.

It may be either regarded as a more or leſs happy manner of expreſſing our ideas; and it is in this point of view I conſider it.

Or a more extenſive ſignification may be given to the word, by confounding the idea with the expreſſion of that idea.

It is in the laſt ſenſe that M. Beccaria, in a diſſertation full of ſpirit and ſagacity, ſays, that to write

write well we ſhould furniſh our minds with an infinity of ideas acceſſory to the ſubject we treat. In this ſenſe the art of writing is the art of exciting in the reader a great number of ſenſations, and we are deficient in ſtyle only becauſe we are deficient in ideas.

For what reaſon in fact does a man write well on one matter, and bad on another? He is not ignorant either of the happy turns, or of the propriety of the words of his language. To what then attribute the weakneſs of his ſtyle? To the want of ideas.

But what do men in general mean by a work well wrote? A work clearly conceived. The public judge only by the effect of the whole; and that judgment is juſt, when it is not propoſed, as here, to diſtinguiſh the ideas from the manner of expreſſing them. The true judges of this manner are the national writers, and it is on them alſo the reputation of a poet depends; whoſe principal merit conſiſts in the elegance of diction.

The reputation of the philoſopher, ſometimes more extenſive, is more independent of the judgment of a ſingle nation. The truth and ſagacity of ideas is the principal merit of a philoſophical work, and of thoſe all people are judges.

Let not the philoſopher however imagine, in conſequence of this, that he may neglect the ornaments of ſtyle. There are no writings the beauty of expreſſion does not embelliſh.

To

To pleaſe a reader, we muſt always make ſtrong impreſſions in him. The neceſſity of affecting him either by the force of expreſſion or by ideas, has been conſtantly recommended by the rhetoricians and writers of every age. The ſeveral rules of the art of poetry, as I have already ſaid, are nothing more than the means of producing this effect.

When an author is deficient in facts, and cannot fix our attention by the grandeur of his images or his thoughts; if his ſtyle be rapid, conciſe, and chaſte, one continued ſeries of elegance, it will ſometimes conceal his impotence *. The writer who is poor in ideas, ſhould be rich in words, and ſubſtitute for the excellence of thoughts a brilliancy of expreſſion.

This is a receipt of which men of genius themſelves have ſometimes made uſe. I might cite for example certain parts of the works of M. Rouſſeau, where we find nothing but a maſs of contradictory ideas and principles. He affords but little inſtruction, but his colouring, always animated, entertains and delights.

The art of writing conſiſts therefore in the art of exciting ſenſations. So that the preſident Monteſquieu himſelf has ſometimes produced admiration, and aſtoniſhed the mind by ideas

* It is perhaps as extraordinary to find a good writer in a man of mediocrity, as a bad one in a man of diſcernment.

more brilliant than juſt. If by their falſity being known, his ideas do not continue to make the ſame impreſſion, it is becauſe, in matters of inſtruction, truth alone is beautiful and obtains a durable eſteem.

When there is a deficiency of ideas, a whimſical arrangement of words may ſometimes amuſe the reader, and produce a lively ſenſation.

Expreſſions that are ſtrong *, obſcure, and uncommon, may ſupply, on a firſt reading, a vacuity of thought. A capricious word or obſolete expreſſion, will excite a ſurprize, and every ſurprize an impreſſion more or leſs ſtrong. The epiſtles of the poet Rouſſeau are a proof of this.

In every ſpecies, eſpecially in that of amenity, the beauty of a work is meaſured by the ſenſation it makes on us. The more complete and diſtinct this ſenſation is, the more lively is the impreſſion it makes. All poetics are nothing more than a commentary on this ſimple principle, and a developement of its primitive rule.

When the rhetors repeat after each other, that the perfection of the works of art depends on their exact reſemblance with thoſe of nature, they de-

* A falſe idea requires an obſcure impreſſion. An error clearly expreſſed is preſently diſcovered. To dare to expreſs our thoughts fully, is to ſhow we are ſure of their truth. The quacks of every ſort write obſcurely. There is no ſchool divine who can ſay with Boileau, *My thoughts always preſent themſelves to broad day.*

Ma penſée au grand jour toujours s'offre & s'expoſe.

ceive

ceive themſelves: experience proves that the beauty of works of this ſort, conſiſts leſs in an exact imitation, than in an improved imitation of nature.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of an improved imitation of nature.

IN the cultivation of the arts there are found works that have no model, and whoſe merit is conſequently independent of any reſemblance with known objects. The palace of a monarch is not modelled after the palace of the univerſe; nor the concords of our muſic adapted to that of the celeſtial ſpheres; thoſe ſounds have never yet ſtruck any mortal ear.

The only works of art whoſe merit conſiſts in an exact imitation of nature, are the figures of men, brutes, fruit, flowers, &c. In almoſt every other ſpecies it is in an embelliſhed imitation of nature that the merit of the work conſiſts.

When Racine, Corneille, or Voltaire, bring a hero on the ſtage, they make him ſay, in a manner the moſt conciſe, the moſt elegant, and harmonious, preciſely what he ought to ſay. Yet no hero ever talked in ſuch manner. It is impoſſible that Mahomet, Zopir, Pompey, Sertorius, &c. whatever capacity we may ſuppoſe them to have had,

1. Always ſpoke in verſe *.

2. That in their converſations they always uſed the moſt conciſe and moſt correct expreſſions.

3. That they pronounced diſcourſes extemporary, that two other great men, ſuch as Corneille and Voltaire, were ſometimes a fortnight or a month in compoſing.

In what did the great poets imitate nature? In making their characters always talk in a manner conformable to the paſſions with which they were ſuppoſed to be animated †. In all other reſpects they embelliſhed nature, and they did right.

But how is nature to be embelliſhed? All our ideas come to us by the ſenſes; we cannot compoſe but after what we have ſeen. How can we conceive any thing beyond nature? and ſuppoſe we could conceive it; by what means could we communicate the idea to another? I anſwer, as in deſcription, for example, what we underſtand by a new compoſition, is properly nothing more than an aſſemblage of objects already

* *And what is ſtill more abſurd, according to the French tragedies, in rhime.*

† On the ſtage the hero ought always to expreſs himſelf in conformity to his character and ſituation. The poet cannot here imitate nature too cloſely. But he ought to adorn it, by collecting in a converſation of perhaps half an hour, all the remarkable ſtrokes in the whole life of the hero.

Perhaps Moliere made all the miſers of the age contribute to the character of his Miſer; as Phidas all the ſtrong men of his age to the model of his Hercules.

known;

known; yet this new aſſemblage is ſufficient to aſtoniſh the imagination, and excite impreſſions in proportion the more ſtrong as they are more new.

Of what do the painters and ſculptors compoſe a ſphinx? Of the wings of an eagle, the body of a lion, and the head of a woman. How was the Venus of Apelles compoſed? Of all the beauties contained in the bodies of ten the moſt beautiful women in Greece. It was thus that by embelliſhing, Apelles imitated nature; and after his example, painters and poets have ſince digged the dens of the Gorgons, modelled the Typhons, conſtructed the palaces of Fairies and Goddeſſes, and in ſhort, decorated with all the riches of genius the various fortunate places of their habitation.

Suppoſe a poet were to deſcribe the gardens of Love. The icy and mortal breath of Boreas would never there be felt, but the Zephyrs would ſweep over the alleys of roſes to blow the flowers and gather their odours. The ſky would be there for ever pure and ſerene. No cloud would ever obſcure it. There would be no mire in the fields, no inſects in the air, or vipers in the woods. The mountains would be there crowned with orange trees and pomegranates in flower, the plains covered with waving ears of corn, and the vallies every where divided by a thouſand rivulets, or traverſed by a majeſtic flood, whoſe vapours elevated by the ſun, and placed in the reſervoir of

the heavens, would never be ſufficiently condenſed to deſcend in rain upon the earth.

The poet would place in this garden ambroſial fountains repleniſhed with golden apples, there ſet bowers round them; and to their ſhade would Love and Pſyche, be conducted, naked, amorous, and ſurrounded by the arms of pleaſure. Never would the reſtleſs bee with his ſting diſturb their joys.

It is thus that poetry embelliſhes nature, and by the decompoſition of objects already known, recompoſes beings and pictures whoſe novelty excites ſurprize, and frequently produces in us the more lively and vigorous impreſſions.

But by what enchantment are we enabled thus to alter and recompoſe objects, to create, ſo to ſay, in the univerſe, and in man, new beings and ſenſations? This enchantment is the work of abſtraction.

CHAP. XIX.

Of the power of abſtraction.

THERE are few abſtract terms in the language of ſavages, and many in thoſe of poliſhed nations. The latter, intereſted in the examen of an infinity of objects, perceive each inſtant the neceſſity of communicating their ideas clearly

clearly and rapidly; for this purpoſe they have invented a great number of abſtract terms: the ſtudy of the ſciences compelled them to it.

Two men, for example, are to conſider a quality common to two bodies; theſe two bodies may be compared relatively to their magnitude, their denſity, their form, or their colours. Now what have theſe two men to do? They are firſt to determine the ſubject of their examen. If it be merely the colour of the bodies they are to compare, and they be both white, they invent the word Whiteneſs; and fixing all their attention on that quality common to both bodies, become better judges of their different degrees of whiteneſs.

If the arts and ſciences have from this motive produced an infinity of abſtract terms in every language, can it be ſurpriſing that by their example poetry alſo has formed its abſtractions? That it has perſonified and deified the imaginary beings of force, juſtice, virtue, a fever, a victory, &c. which are nothing more in reality than man conſidered as ſtrong, juſt, virtuous, diſeaſed, victorious, &c. and that they have in ſhort peopled Olympus with abſtractions.

Does a poet undertake to be the architect of the celeſtial abodes, and to conſtruct the palace of Plutus? He places the edifice in the centre of mountains of the colour and denſity of gold. He then gives to maſſy ſtones the ſplendor of

rubies or brilliants; by these means he is enabled to construct the palace of Plutus, or the crystalline walls of heaven. Without this power of abstraction, Milton would not have been able to assemble in the garden of Eden, or the fairies, so many picturesque points of view, so many delicious grottos, trees, and flowers, in a word, so many beauties distributed by nature among a thousand countries.

It is by the power of abstraction that the writers of romance create pigmies, genii, enchanters, &c. in short, that Fortunatus whose invisibility is nothing but the abstraction of the apparent qualities of bodies.

It is to the power of divesting an object of all its defects *, and of creating roses without thorns, that man owes all his factitious pains and pleasures.

For what reason is it in fact, that we always expect more pleasure from the possession of an object than it really procures us? Why so much difference between the pleasure expected and enjoyed? Because we take the pleasure in reality as it comes, whereas in hope we enjoy the same pleasure with-

* He who should represent on the stage a tragic action in the manner it really happened, would run great risk of disgusting the spectators.

What should the poet then do? Divest the relation of every thing that will not make a lively impression.

out any mixture of that pain or trouble which almoſt always attends it.

That perfect happineſs we ſeek after is not to be found but in the palace of hope and imagination. It is there that poetry paints as eternal, thoſe rapid moments of intoxication that love ſcatters, at wide diſtances, in the career of our days. It is there that we imagine for ever to enjoy that vigour and warmth of ſenſation we feel but once or twice in our lives, and which doubtleſs ariſe from the novelty of ſenſations excited in us by the firſt objects of our tenderneſs. It is there, in fine, that exaggerating a pleaſure rarely taſted and often deſired, we over-rate the felicity of opulence.

If chance open to poverty the temple of wealth, when illuminated by a hundred tapers, and reſounding with ſprightly muſic; then, ſtruck with the ſplendor of the decorations, and the harmony of the inſtruments, how happy are the rich! Cries indigence. His felicity as far exceeds mine as the magnificence of this temple does the poverty of my hut. He is however miſtaken, and the dupe of the lively impreſſion juſt received; he does not know that is in part an effect of the novelty of the ſenſations he feels, and that an habitual enjoyment would dull the vivacity, render the temple and the concert inſipid; and moreover that the pleaſures of the rich are purchaſed by a thouſand cares and anxieties.

But

But indigence has by his abſtractions diveſted riches of all the cares and diſcontent by which they are attended *.

Without the power of abſtraction our conceptions would not extend further than enjoyment. Now, if in the boſom of delights we ſtill feel deſires and regrets, it is, as I have ſaid, an effect of the difference we find between imaginary and actual pleaſure.

The power of reſolving and recompoſing objects, and of creating ſuch as are new, we may regard not only as the ſource of an infinity of factitious pains and pleaſures, but alſo as the only mean of embelliſhing nature by imitation, and of carrying the arts of amenity to the higheſt degree of perfection.

I ſhall not expatiate any further on the beauty of theſe arts. I have ſhewn that their principal object is to preſerve us from diſcontent: that this object is the better accompliſhed as they excite in us ſenſations that are moſt lively and diſtinct; and laſtly, that it is always by the greater or leſs force of thoſe ſenſations, that the degree of perfection and beauty of works of this ſort are to be eſtimated.

* The power of abſtracting from a condition different from our own the evils we have not felt, makes a man always envy the lot of another. What ſhould he do to eradicate this envy, ſo incompatible with his happineſs? Undeceive himſelf, and learn, that a man above want is nearly as happy as he can be.

Let

Let us then honour and cultivate the fine arts: they are the glory of the human mind (5), and the ſource of an infinity of delicious ſenſations. But let us not imagine the idly rich to be ſuperlatively happy in the enjoyment of their moſt maſterly productions.

We have ſeen in the firſt chapters of this ſection, that without being equal in riches and power, all men may be equally happy, at leaſt in the ten or twelve hours of the day employed in the gratifying their ſeveral corporeal wants.

With regard to the ten or twelve hours, which ſeparate a gratified from a riſing want, I have proved that they are filled up in the moſt agreeable manner, when they are conſecrated to the acquiſition of the means of providing abundantly for our wants and amuſements. What can I do more to confirm the truth of this opinion, except ſtop a moment to conſider which is the moſt aſſuredly happy, the opulent idler, ſo fatigued with having nothing to do, or the man of mediocrity, whoſe fortune compels him to a daily labour that he can purſue without wearineſs.

CHAP. XX.

Of the impreſſions of the arts of amenity on the opulent idler.

IF a rich man be by his ſituation compelled to a labour that habit renders agreeable; he may, by being continually employed in his occupation, like the man of mediocrity, avoid diſcontent.

But where find opulent men of this ſort? Sometimes in England, where money opens the career to ambition. Every where elſe the rich, accompanied by idleneſs, are paſſive in almoſt all their amuſements. They expect amuſement from the objects that ſurround them, and but few of thoſe objects excite in them lively ſenſations. Beſide, ſuch ſenſations cannot ſucceed each other rapidly, nor be removed inceſſantly. The days of the idler, therefore, paſs away in a ſtupid languor.

In vain does the rich man collect about him the arts of amenity; theſe arts cannot procure him inceſſantly new impreſſions, nor preſerve him a long time from diſcontent. His curioſity is ſo ſoon gratified, the idler has ſo little ſenſibility, the chefs d'oeuvres of the arts make on him impreſſions ſo ſoon effaced, that to amuſe him they muſt be inceſſantly renewed. Now all the artiſts of an empire could not, in theſe circumſtances, ſupply his wants.

A moment

A moment only is ſufficient for admiration: an age is neceſſary to produce a maſterpiece of art. How many wealthy idlers paſs daily under the magnificent portal of the old Louvre, which ſtrangers behold with aſtoniſhment, without feeling one agreeable ſenſation.

To ſhew the difficulty of amuſing a rich idler, it ſhould be obſerved that there are but two conditions of man; in one of which he is active, and the other paſſive.

CHAP. XXI.

Of the active and paſſive ſtate of man.

IN the firſt of theſe ſtates a man can ſupport himſelf a conſiderable time in the ſame ſituation without diſcontent. In the ſecond he cannot. I can perform ſix hours in a concert, but I cannot attend one three hours without diſguſt.

No man is more difficult to amuſe than the paſſive idler. All things diſguſt him. It is this univerſal diſcontent that renders him ſo ſevere a judge of the beauties of the arts, and that makes him require ſo much perfection in their works. If more ſenſible and leſs diſcontent, he would be more eaſily pleaſed.

What lively impreſſions can the arts of amenity excite in the idle? If thoſe arts charm us, it is by

retracing and embelliſhing in our minds the images of paſt pleaſures, and by exciting in us the deſire of taſting them again. Now what deſire can they awaken in a man who is rich enough to purchaſe all pleaſures, and is already ſatiated with them ?

In vain does the dance and decorations, in a word, the pleaſures the moſt voluptuous, and moſt peculiarly conſecrated to love, by recalling intoxication and tranſports, attempt to make any impreſſion on him, who is already exhauſted with the fatigue of enjoyment. If the rich court balls and theatres, it is for a change of diſguſt, and by that change to alleviate their diſcontent.

Such in general is the lot of princes. Such was that of the famous Bonnier. Scarce had he formed a wiſh, before the genius of riches came to accompliſh it. Bonnier was tired of women, concerts, and theatres : ſo unhappy he was that he had nothing left to wiſh for. Had he been leſs rich, he would have had deſires.

Deſire is the motive principal of the ſoul; without deſire it ſtagnates ! We muſt deſire to act, and act to be happy. Bonnier died of diſguſt in the midſt of delights.

Our only lively enjoyment is by hope. Happineſs reſides leſs in the poſſeſſion than in the attainment of the objects of our deſires.

To

To be happy, we muſt want ſomething of our felicity. It is not after having acquired a million of money, but in the acquirement that we are really fortunate. It is not after having been proſperous, but in proſpering that we are happy. The ſoul then always in action, always agreeably agitated, knows no diſcontent.

From whence ariſes the immoderate paſſion of the great for the chace? Becauſe paſſive in almoſt all their other amuſements, and conſequently always uneaſy, it is in the chace alone they are forced to be active. Men are alſo active when gaming; and for that reaſon the gameſter is the leſs liable to diſguſt *.

Men however play either high or low. In the firſt caſe gaming is attended with anxiety, and ſometimes with miſchievous conſequences; in the ſecond, it is almoſt always inſipid.

That rich and paſſive idleneſs ſo envied by all, and that in an excellent form of government, would not be ſeen without diſgrace, is not therefore ſo happy as imagined; for it is commonly expoſed to diſcontent.

* Play is not always uſed as a remedy for diſguſt. Small play, a game of amuſement is ſometimes a cover-fool. People frequently play with a hope of not being known for what they are.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

That it is the rich who feel moſt ſenſibly the want of riches.

IF the opulent idler never thinks himſelf ſufficiently rich, it is becauſe the riches he enjoys are not ſufficient for his happineſs. Has he muſicians in pay? Their concerts do not fill the vacuity in his mind. He muſt alſo have architects, a vaſt palace, an immenſe cage to incloſe a mournful bird. He wants beſide hunting equipages, balls, feſtivals, &c. Diſcontent is a fathomleſs gulph, that would ſwallow up all the wealth of an empire, perhaps that of the whole univerſe. Labour only can fill it up. A ſmall fortune will ſuffice a laborious citizen: his life, ſimple and uniform, is attended with no tempeſt. It was not in the tomb of Crœſus *, but on that of Baucis, this epitaph was engraved;

"His death was the evening of a beautiful day."

* If felicity were always the companion of power, what man would have been more happy than the Calif Abdoulrahman. Yet the following is the inſcription he ordered to be engraved on his tomb: "Honours, riches, ſovereign power; "I have enjoyed them all. Cotemporary princes have eſ- "teemed and feared me, and envied my happineſs: they have "been jealous of my glory, and ſought my friendſhip. In "the courſe of my life I have carefully marked all the days "on which I taſted pure and true pleaſure, and in a reign of "fifty years, I have counted only fourteen."

Great

Great treaſures are the appearance of happineſs, not the reality. There is more true happineſs in the houſe of competency than in that of opulence; and men ſup more gaily at a tavern, than with the preſident Hainaut.

He who is employed is free from diſcontent. So that the workman in his ſhop, or the tradeſman behind his counter, is often more happy than his ſovereign. A moderate fortune compels us to daily labour; if that labour be not exceſſive, and if the habit of it be contracted, it then becomes agreeable *. Every man who by a labour of this ſort can provide for his corporeal wants and amuſements, is nearly as happy as he can be †. But ſhould we reckon amuſements among our wants? Men as well as children muſt have moments of recreation, or a change of employment. With what pleaſure do the workman and the lawyer quit, the one his ſhop and the other his office, for the theatre? If they be more affected there than the man of pleaſure, it is becauſe the ſenſations

* We are yet ignorant of the power habit has over us. They are, they ſay, well fed and lodged at the Baſtile, and yet they there die of chagrin. Why? Becauſe they are deprived of their liberty, that is, they cannot exerciſe their common occupations.

† The condition of the workman who can by a moderate labour, provide for his wants, and thoſe of his family, is perhaps of all conditions the moſt happy. The want that compels his mind to application and his body to exerciſe, is a preſervative againſt diſcontent and diſeaſe: now theſe are evils, joy and health advantages.

they there feel being leſs dulled by habit, have for them more novelty.

Have we moreover contracted the habit of a certain exerciſe of body and mind? That occupation accompliſhed, we become ſenſible to amuſements, even where we are paſſive. If thoſe amuſements be inſipid to the idly opulent, it is becauſe they make a buſineſs of pleaſure, and not a relaxation. The labour to which man was formerly, they ſay, condemned, was not a puniſhment of heaven, but a benefaction of nature. Labour ſuppoſes deſire, and the man without deſire vegetates without any principle of activity; the body and the ſoul remain, if I may uſe the expreſſion, in the ſame attitude *. Occupation is the happineſs of man †. But to be occupied and uſe exerciſe, what is neceſſary? A motive: and

* One of the principal cauſes of the ignorance and ſloth of the Africans, is the fertility of that part of the world; which ſupplies almoſt all neceſſaries without culture. The African has therefore no motive for reflection, and in fact he reflects but little. The ſame may be ſaid of the Caribbs; if they be leſs induſtrious than the ſavages of the North of America, it is becauſe they have leſs occaſion to labour for ſubſiſtence.

† It is neceſſary for the happineſs of man, that pleaſure ſhould be the reward of labour, but of a moderate labour. If nature had of itſelf provided for all his wants, it would have made him the moſt pernicious of all preſents; he would have paſt his days in languor; the idly rich would have been without reſource againſt diſcontent. What palliative could there have been for this evil? None: if all the people were without wants, all would be equally opulent. Where then would the wealthy idler find men to procure him amuſement.

of

of all others that of hunger is the moſt powerful, and moſt general. It is that commands the peaſant to labour in the fields, and the ſavage to hunt and fiſh in the foreſt.

A want of another kind animates the artiſt and the man of letters: the deſire of glory, of the public eſteem and of the pleaſures they repreſent.

Every want, every deſire, compels men to labour, and when they have contracted an early habit it becomes agreeable. For want of that habit, idleneſs renders labour hateful, and it is with averſion that men ſow, reap, or even think.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of the power of idleneſs.

WHEN men have the choice of being thieves or labourers, it is the former profeſſion they embrace. Mankind in general are idle, they prefer almoſt always fatigue, danger, and death itſelf, to the labour of cultivating the earth. My examples are the great nation of the Malaccans, part of Tartary, and the Arabs, all the inhabitants of Taurus, Caucaſus, and the high mountains of Aſia.

But it will be ſaid, whatever be the love of mankind for idleneſs, and if there be nations of thieves, who are redoubtable for a warlike ſpirit, are there not alſo nations of labouring people?

Yes, becauſe the exiſtence of a nation of thieves ſuppoſes that of people who may be robbed. The former are not very numerous, becauſe many ſheep are neceſſary to the maintenance of a few wolves: and becauſe the thieving nations inhabit barren and inacceſſible mountains, and cannot, but on ſuch retreats, reſiſt a numerous and cultivated nation. Now if it be true, that men are in general pirates and robbers, whenever the natural ſituation of their country permits it with impunity; the love of robbery muſt then be natural to them. On what is this love founded? On idleneſs, that is, on an inclination to obtain, with the leaſt trouble poſſible, the object of their deſires.

Idleneſs is in man the ſecret cauſe of the greateſt effects. It is from a want of motives ſufficiently powerful to preſerve them from idleneſs, that the Satraps, as much thieves and more idle than the Malaccans, are alſo more diſcontented and unhappy.

CHAP. XXIV.

A moderate fortune ſecures the happineſs of a citizen.

HABIT renders labour eaſy: if we do that always without pain which we are always doing, and if every mean of acquiring pleaſure ought to be reckoned among the pleaſures, a moderate fortune, by compelling man to labour, ſecures

cures his felicity the better, as labour always fills up, in the moſt agreeable manner, the time that ſeparates a gratified want from the next that ſhall ariſe, and conſequently the twelve only hours of a day in which we ſuppoſe the greateſt inequality in the happineſs of men.

When a government ſecures to its ſubjects the full poſſeſſion of their property, their lives and their liberty; oppoſes the too unequal diſtribution of the national riches and preſerves all the people in a certain degree of eaſe, it ſupplies them with all the means of being nearly as happy as they can be.

Therefore, without being equal in wealth and dignity, individuals may be equal in felicity. But however demonſtrable this propoſition may be, are there any means to perſuade mankind of its truth, and to prevent them from perpetually aſſociating in their minds, the idea of happineſs with that of opulence?

CHAP. XXV.

Of the aſſociation of the ideas of happineſs and wealth in the minds of men.

IN every country were men are not ſecure in their property, their lives, and their liberty, the ideas of wealth and happineſs muſt be fre-

quently confounded. Men are in want of protection, and riches procure it.

In all other countries diſtinct ideas may be formed of them. If the Fakirs by the aid of a religious catechiſm can perſuade mankind of the groſſeſt abſurdities, why may we not by the aid of a moral catechiſm perſuade them that they are happy, when to be ſo, it is only neceſſary to think themſelves ſo *? This belief makes a part of our felicity. Whoever thinks himſelf unhappy, is unhappy. But can men deceive themſelves in this important point? What are then the greateſt obſtacles to man's felicity? Ignorance and envy.

That paſſion which is laudable in youth while it bears the name of emulation, become pernicious when in advanced age it aſſumes that of envy. From whence does it proceed? From a falſe and exaggerated opinion we form of the

* There are two habitual cauſes of the unhappineſs of men. The one is, *An ignorance of the little that is neceſſary to our happineſs*; the other, *imaginary wants, and deſires without bounds.* Is a merchant rich? He would be the richeſt in his city. Is a man king? He would be the moſt powerful of all kings. We ſhould ſometimes remember the ſaying of Montaigne. *That when we are ſeated, be it on a throne or a joint-ſtool, we are always on our breech.* That if power and wealth be the means of attaining happineſs, we ſhould not confound the means with the end. That we ſhould not purchaſe with too many cares, labours, and dangers, what we can have at a cheaper rate. And laſtly, that in the ſearch of happineſs we ſhould not forget that it is happineſs we ſeek.

felicity

felicity of certain conditions, and the way to deſtroy this opinion is to enlighten mankind. It is by a knowledge of the truth they are to be reformed; that alone can ſtifle in them the inteſtine war, that ſecretly and eternally excited among men of different profeſſions and talents, divides almoſt all the members of poliſhed ſocieties.

Ignorance and envy, by filling them with the gall of an unjuſt and reciprocal hatred, has prevented them too long from diſcovering an important truth, which is, that a ſmall fortune, as I have proved, is ſufficient for their happineſs *. Let not this be regarded as a common-place maxim of the pulpit or the profeſſor's chair: the more accurately it is examined, the more clearly its truth will appear.

If a reflection on this axiom can convince an infinity of individuals of their happineſs, who want nothing to be ſo, but to think themſelves ſo, this truth is not therefore one of thoſe ſpeculative maxims that cannot be applied to practice.

* Thoſe men, who from a ſtate of opulence paſs to that of mediocrity, are doubtleſs unhappy. They have in their firſt ſtate, contracted deſires they cannot gratify in the ſecond. I therefore here ſpeak of ſuch men only as being born without fortune have no habits to overcome. A ſmall fortune is ſufficient for the happineſs of the latter; at leaſt in countries where opulence does not intitle a man to public eſteem.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the remote utility of my principles.

IF I be the firſt that has proved the poſſibility of an equal diſtribution of happineſs among individuals, and geometrically demonſtrated this important truth: I am happy; I can regard myſelf as the benefactor of mankind, and ſay,

All that moraliſts have publiſhed concerning the equality of conditions, all that the writers of romance have ſaid about the taliſman of Oroſames, was but an obſcure perception of what I have proved.

If I ſhould be reproached with having inſiſted too long on this queſtion, I ſhould reply, that the public felicity conſiſting of that of all the individuals, to know what it is that conſtitutes the happineſs of the whole, we muſt firſt know what it is that conſtitutes the happineſs of each particular; and ſhow, that if there be no government where all men can be equally rich and powerful, there is no one where they may not be equally happy; and laſtly that there may be a legiſlation where (except ſuch as are in peculiar unfortunate circumſtances) there would be none unhappy but fools.

But an equal partition of happineſs among individuals, ſuppoſes a leſs unequal partition of the national riches. Now in what government of Europe can ſuch a partition be at preſent eſtabliſhed? The approaching poſſibility of it does not appear without doubt. However, the alternation that is daily making in the conſtitutions of all empires, proves that at leaſt this poſſibility is not a Platonic chimera.

After a time, more or leſs remote, all poſſibilities, ſay the ſages, muſt be realized; why then deſpair of the future felicity of mankind? Who can maintain that the truths here eſtabliſhed, will be always unuſeful to mankind?

It will be extraordinary, but neceſſary, in a given time, that a Penn, a Manco Capac, ſhall be born to give laws to riſing ſocieties. Now ſuppoſe (what perhaps will be ſtill more extordinary) that, jealous of a new glory, ſuch a man ſhould be deſirous of conſecrating his name to poſterity under the title of a friend to mankind; and that conſequently more anxious for the eſtabliſhing of goods laws, and the happineſs of his people, than the increaſe of his power, that man ſhould wiſh to make them happy and not ſlaves; there is no doubt, as I ſhall prove in the ninth ſection, but that he would perceive in the principles I have here eſtabliſhed, the ſource of a new legiſlation, and one that is more conformable to the happineſs of humanity.

NOTES.

NOTES.

1. (page 194.) THERE are no calumnies with which the clergy of France have not blackened the philoſophers. They accuſed them of not acknowledging any ſuperiority of rank, birth or dignity, and thought thereby to iritate people in power againſt them; but this accuſation was happily too vague and abſurd. In fact, in what reſpect can a philoſopher regard himſelf as equal to a nobleman? It muſt either be as a chriſtian, for under that title, all men are brothers; or in quality of the ſubject of a deſpot, becauſe all his ſubjects are ſlaves, and all ſlaves are eſſentially of the ſame condition. Now philoſophers are not apoſtles either of papiſm or of deſpotiſm; and beſide, there ought not to be any deſpote in France. But are the titles with which they decorate noblemen in France, any thing more than the toys of a puerile vanity? Have they neceſſarily any part in the management of public affairs, any real power? They are not great in this ſenſe, but they bear titles of reſpect, and ought to be reſpected.

2. (p. 207) The man of buſineſs has little diſcontent, and little deſire. When we ſeek after immenſe wealth, it is with a deſign to avoid diſcontent, or to procure pleaſures. He who has no want, is indifferent to wealth. It is with the love of money as with that of luxury; when a young man is fond of women, he regards luxury in furniture, feaſts, and equipages as means of ſeducing them, and is therefore fond of luxury. When he grows old, and becomes inſenſible to love, he ungilds his coach, is drawn by old horſes, and takes off the lace from his cloaths. This man loved luxury as the means of procuring certain pleaſures, but when he no longer deſires thoſe pleaſures, he has no longer any love for luxury.

3. (p. 218.) The marriage of perſons of certain conditions frequently repreſent nothing more than the picture of two unfortunate people who are chained together, to be a reciprocal torment to each other.

Marriage has two objects: the one the preſervation of the ſpecies, the other the pleaſure and happineſs of the two ſexes.

The

The ſearch of pleaſure is permitted: why ſhould we deprive ourſelves of it, when it is not detrimental to ſociety?

But marriage, as it is inſtituted in catholic countries, agrees not equally with all profeſſions. To what ſhall we refer the uniformity of its inſtitution? I anſwer, to the conformity between this mode of matrimony and the primitive ſtate of the habitants of Europe, that is, the ſtate of peaſants. In that rank the man and woman have a common object of deſire, which is the improvement of the land they occupy; this improvement reſults from their mutual labours. The man and wife conſtantly occupied in their farm, and always uſeful to each other, ſupport, without diſguſt, and without inconvenience, their indiſſoluble union. It is not the ſame in other profeſſions.

The clergy do not marry. Why? Becauſe in the preſent form of matrimony, the church opines, that a wife, a family, and the cares that attend them, would divert a prieſt from his functions. But do they divert the magiſtrate, the man of letters, and the miniſter, and are not the functions of theſe more ſerious and important than thoſe of a prieſt? Do the governments of Europe think this form of marriage better adapted to the profeſſion of arms? As a proof of the contrary, they forbid it to almoſt all their ſoldiers. Now what does this interdiction ſuppoſe? That nations inſtructed by experience, have found that a wife corrupts the manners of a warrior, ſtifles his patriotic ſpirit, and renders him at length effeminate, ſlothful, and timid.

What remedy is there for this evil? In Pruſſia, if a ſoldier of the firſt battalion meets with a handſome girl, he lies with her, and their union laſts as long as their love and convenience. If they have children and cannot maintain them, the king takes care of them, they are brought up in a houſe founded for that purpoſe. The monarch there forms a nurſery of young ſoldiers. Now if this prince had the diſpoſing of a much greater number of eccleſiaſtical funds, he might execute at large what he can now only do in little, and his ſoldiers, at once lovers and fathers, would enjoy all the pleaſures of love without emaſculating their manners, or loſing any part of their courage.

The

The law of indiſſolubility in marriage, is a cruel and barbarous law, ſays Fontenelle. The few happy marriages in France proves the neceſſity of a reformation in this matter.

There are countries where the lover and his miſtreſs do not marry till after they have lived together three years. During that time they try the ſympathy of their characters. If they do not agree, they part, and the girl goes to another.

Theſe African marriages are the moſt proper to ſecure the happineſs of the parties. But how then muſt the children be provided for? By the ſame laws that ſecure their maintenance in countries where divorces are permitted. Let the ſons remain with the father, and the daughters go with the mother; and let a certain ſum be ſtipulated in the marriage articles for the education of ſuch children; and let the tenths of the clergy and the hoſpitals be charged with the maintenance of thoſe whoſe parents are incapable. The inconvenience of divorce will then be inſignificant, and the happineſs of the married parties ſecured. But, they will ſay, how many divorces will there be under a law ſo favourable to human inconſtancy! Experience proves the contrary.

To conclude, if the variable and ambulatory deſires of men and women urge them ſometimes to change the object of their tenderneſs, why ſhould they be deprived of the pleaſure of variety, if their inconſtancy, by the regulation of wiſe laws, be not detrimental to ſociety?

In France the women are two much miſtreſſes; in the Eaſt too much ſlaves: they are there a ſacrifice to the pleaſure of men. But why ſhould they be a ſacrifice? If the two parties ceaſe to love, and begin to hate each other, why ſhould they be obliged to live together?

Beſide, if it be true that the deſire of change be ſo conformable as they ſay to human nature, the privilege of change may be propoſed as the reward of merit; and by this ſoldiers may be made more brave, magiſtrates more juſt, artiſans more induſtrious, and men of genius more ſtudious.

What ſort of pleaſure is there, that, in the hands of a wiſe legiſlator, may not be made the inſtrument of public felicity?

4. (p. 257.) There are few tragic poets who know mankind: few among them who ſufficiently ſtudy their various paſſions, to make them always talk their proper language: yet every one has a peculiar dialect. Is a man to be turned aſide from an imprudent or dangerous action, and does humanity undertake

dertake to give him advice in the affair? It operates on his vanity; it shews him the truth, but in expressions the least offensive; and at the same time softens the most severe parts of it by tone and gesture.

Severity speaks bluntly: malignity in a manner the most mortifying. Pride commands imperiously; it is deaf to all reply, it will be obeyed without hesitation. Reason examines with the man the sagacity of his actions, hears his reply, and submits to the judgment of those it concerns.

Amity, full of tenderness for his friend, contradicts him with regret: if he be not able to persuade, he has recourse to prayers and tears, and conjures him, by the sacred bond that unites their happiness, not to expose himself to so dangerous an action.

Love takes another tone, and to combat the resolution of her admirer, alledges no other motive than her pleasure and her love; if those fail, she at last condescends to reason, for reason is always the last resource of love.

One may therefore discover the sort of character or passion, by the manner in which the advice is given. But has fraud a peculiar language? No: the impostor borrows sometimes that of friendship, and is to be discovered by the difference there is between the sentiment he affects, and those he ought to have. When we examine the language of the different passions and characters, we find the tragic writers frequently deficient. There are few of them who do not, for want of knowing how to make a character speak the language of a particular passion, give it that of another. I cannot speak of the tragic poets without quoting Lord Shaftesbury: he alone appears to me to have the true idea of tragedy. "The object of comedy, he "says, is the correction of the manners of private persons; that "of tragedy ought to be in like manner the correction of the "manners of ministers and sovereigns. He adds, why not "intitle tragedies, *The tyrant king, the weak, superstitious, "haughty, or adulated monarch.* This is the only method of "rendering tragedies still more useful."

5. (p. 251.) A man instructed by the discoveries of his progenitors receives the inheritance of their thoughts; which is a legacy he is charged to leave to his descendants, improved by some of his own ideas. How many men, in this respect, die insolvent.

SEC.

SECTION IX.

Of the poſſibility of laying down a good plan of legiſlation.

Of the obſtacles ignorance oppoſes to its publication.

Of the ridicule it throws on every new idea, and every profound ſtudy of morality and politics.

Of the inconſtancy it ſuppoſes in the human mind: an inconſtancy incompatible with the duration of good laws.

Of the imaginary danger to which (if we believe ignorance) the publication of a new idea, and eſpecially new principles of laws, muſt expoſe empires.

Of the too fatal indifference of men to the examination of moral or political truths.

Of the title of true or falſe given to the ſame opinions, according to the momentary intereſt we have to believe them the one or the other.

CHAP. I.

Of the difficulty of laying down a good plan of legiſlation.

FEW celebrated men have wrote on morality and legiſlation. What is the cauſe of their ſilence? Is it the grandeur, the importance of the

the ſubject, and the number of ideas, in ſhort, the extent of underſtanding neceſſary to treat it properly? No: Their ſilence is the effect of the indifference of the public for works of this ſort.

A work of this kind when well executed is regarded at beſt as nothing more than the dream of a well meaning man, it becomes the ſubject of a thouſand diſcuſſions, a thouſand diſputes, that the ignorance of ſome and the duplicity of others render indeterminable. In what contempt muſt not that work be held, whoſe diſtant utility is always treated as a Platonic chimera.

In countries that are poliſhed, and already ſubject to certain laws, manners, and prejudices, a good plan of legiſlation being always incompatible with an infinity of perſonal intereſts, eſtabliſhed abuſes, and plans already adopted, will always appear ridicuolus. It will be a long time before its importance is demonſtrated, and during that time it will be always conteſted.

If however a man of an elevated and nervous character, ſhould be deſirous of braving ridicule and elucidating nations on the important object of their happineſs, may I be permitted to remind him, that the public with difficulty attend the examen of a complicated queſtion, and that if their be a method to fix their attention on the problem of an excellent legiſlation, it is by rendering

dering it ſimple and reducing it to two propoſitions.

The object of the firſt ſhould be the diſcovery of laws proper to render men the moſt happy poſſible, and conſequently to procure them all the amuſements and pleaſures compatible with the public welfare.

The object of the ſecond ſhould be the diſcovery of means by which a people may be made to paſs inſenſibly from the ſtate of miſery they ſuffer, to the ſtate of happineſs they might enjoy.

To reſolve the firſt of theſe propoſitions, we muſt follow the example of mathematicians. When a complicated problem in mechanics is propoſed to them, what do they? Simplify it. Calculate the velocity of moving bodies without regarding their denſity, the reſiſtance of fluids that ſurround them, their friction with other bodies, &c.

To reſolve the firſt part of the problem of an excellent legiſlation, we ſhould, in like manner, have no regard to the reſiſtance of prejudices, nor the friction of contrary and perſonal intereſts, nor to manners, laws, and cuſtoms already eſtabliſhed. The inquirer ſhould act like the founder of a religious order, who in dictating his monaſtic laws has no regard to the habits and prejudices of his future ſubjects.

It will not be ſo with the ſecond part of this problem. It is not after our own conceptions, but

but from a knowledge of the preſent laws and cuſtoms, that we can determine the means of gradually changing thoſe cuſtoms and laws, and of making a people paſs, by inſenſible degrees, from their preſent legiſlation to the beſt poſſible.

It is an eſſential and remarkable difference between theſe two propoſitions, that the firſt being once reſolved, its ſolution (except in ſome differences ariſing from the particular ſituation of a country) becomes general, and the ſame for all nations.

On the contrary, the ſolution of the ſecond ought to be different according to the different form of each ſtate. It is evident that the government of the Turks, Swiſs, Spaniards, or Portugueſe, muſt be neceſſarily placed at diſtances, greater or leſs, from a perfect legiſlation.

If genius alone be ſufficient to ſolve the firſt of theſe propoſitions, to ſolve the ſecond there muſt be added to genius a knowledge of the principal laws and manners of the people whoſe legiſlation is to be changed inſenſibly.

To treat a queſtion of this ſort properly, it is neceſſary in general to have ſtudied, at leaſt in a ſummary manner, the cuſtoms and prejudices of the people of all ages and all countries. We cannot perſuade men but by facts; we cannot inſtruct them but by examples. The man who oppoſes the cleareſt reaſonings will often ſubmit to facts the moſt equivocal.

But these facts acquired, what are the questions whose examination can give the solution of the problem of the best legislation? I shall enumerate those that present themselves the first to my mind.

CHAP. II.

Of the first questions we should ask ourselves when we would establish good laws.

WE may ask,

1. What motive unites men in society? Is it the fear of ferocious beasts that obliges men to live separate from them, and to destroy them to secure their own lives and subsistence; or did some other motive of the same kind form the first colonies?

2. If mankind once united, and becoming successively hunters, pastors, and husbandmen, were not obliged to form conventions and give themselves laws?

3. If these laws can have any other foundation than the common desire of securing their property, their lives, and their liberty, which in an unsocial state, as in that of despotism, is exposed to the violence of the strongest?

4. If that arbitrary power under which a citizen is exposed to the insults of violence, and where he

he is deprived even of the right of natural defence, can be regarded as a form of government?

5. If the eſtabliſhment of deſpotiſm in an empire does not deſtroy all the bonds of ſocial union? If the ſame motives, the ſame wants that united men at firſt, do not command them to diſſolve a ſociety where, as in Turkey, a man has no property in his goods, his life, or his liberty; where, in ſhort, the citizens being in continual war among themſelves know no other laws than thoſe of force and fraud?

6. If property can be a long time reſpected without introducing, as in England, a certain equilibrium of power among the different claſſes of citizens?

7. If there be any method of preſerving the duration of that equilibrium; and if its maintenance be not abſolutely neceſſary for oppoſing, in an efficacious manner, the continual efforts of the great to poſſeſs the property of the little?

8. If the means propoſed by M. Hume, in his ſmall but excellent treatiſe on a perfect republic, are ſufficient to produce this effect?

9. If the introduction of money into a republic*, does not at length produce that unequal

* Gold, the corrupter of the manners of a nation, is a forcerer that frequently converts an honeſt man into a knave. Lycurgus knew this well, and chaſed the wizard from Lacedæmon.

distribution of wealth which furnishes the powerful with those fetters they put on their fellow-citizens

10. If the poor have really a country; if the man without property owes any thing to the country where he possesses nothing; if the extreme indigent being always in the pay of the rich and powerful, must not frequently favour their ambition; and lastly, if the indigent have not too many wants to be virtuous?

11. If the laws could not unite the interest of the majority of the inhabitants with that of their country, by the subdivision of property?

12. If after the example of the Lacedæmonians, whose territory being divided in thirty-nine thousand lots, was distributed among thirty-nine thousand families, who formed the nation, there might not be assigned in case of a too great increase of inhabitants, a greater or less extent of land to each family, but still in proportion to the number that compose it *?

13. If a less unequal distribution of land and wealth †, would not keep an infinity of men

* On this supposition, to preserve a certain equality in the distribution of property, if a family diminishes it must cede a part of its land to some neighbouring and more numerous families. Why not?

† When the number of proprietors in a nation is very small, in proportion to the great number of inhabitants, even the suppression of taxes would not preserve the latter from misery. The only way to relieve them would be to levy a tax on the state

from that evil which is occaſioned by the exaggerated idea they form of the felicity of the rich *, an idea that produces great enmity among men, and great indifference for the public welfare?

14. If it be by a large or ſmall number of wholeſome and clear laws, that nations ſhould be governed? If in the time of the emperors, when the multiplicity of laws occaſioned their being collected into the codes of Juſtinian, Trebonius, &c. the Romans were more virtuous and happy than under the laws of the Twelve Tables?

15. If the multiplicity of laws does not occaſion an ignorance and inexecution of them?

16. If the ſame multiplicity of laws, often contrary to each other, does not oblige nations to employ certain men and bodies of men to in-

ſtate or the clergy, and employ the produce in purchaſing ſmall portions of land, which being diſtributed every year among the pooreſt families, would continually augment the number of proprietors,

* The proſpect of luxury certainly increaſes the miſery of the poor. The rich know it, and retrench nothing of their parade. What is the miſery of the poor to them? Princes themſelves are very little concerned about it; they regard their ſubjects as nothing better than deſpicable cattle. If they nouriſh them, it is becauſe their increaſe promotes the prince's intereſt. All governments talk about population. But what empire ſhould be made populous? That whoſe people are happy. To multiply the inhabitants under a bad government, is a barbarous method of multiplying wretches; it is to furniſh tyranny with new inſtruments to enſlave other nations, and render them equally unhappy. It is to propagate the miſeries of mankind.

terpret them? And if these men or bodies of men, charged with their interpretation, may not insensibly change the laws and make them the instruments of their ambition? And lastly, if experience does not teach us, that wherever there are many laws, there is little justice?

17. In a wise government there ought to be suffered two supreme and independent powers, such as the temporal and spiritual?

18. If the magnitude of cities ought to be limited?

19. If their extreme extent permits their manners to be properly inspected? If in great cities, the salutary punishments of shame and infamy can be properly inflicted *; and if in such cities as Paris or Constantinople, an offender, by changing his name and abode, may not always escape punishment?

20. If by a federative compact, more perfect than that of the Greeks, a certain number of small republics might not shelter themselves from the invasion of an enemy, and the tyranny of an ambitious citizen?

21. If a country as large as France was to be divided into thirty provinces or republics, and to each of them a territory nearly equal was to be assigned, and if each of these territories were cir-

* Under a wise government the punishment of shame alone would be sufficient to restrain the citizen to his duty.

cumscribed

cumſcribed by immutable bounds, or its poſſeſſion guarantied by the other twenty-nine republics, it is to be imagined that any one of thoſe republics could enſlave all the others, that is, that any one man could combat with advantage againſt twenty-nine men.

22. If on the ſuppoſition that all theſe republics were governed by the ſame laws, where each of them took care of its interior police and the election of its magiſtrates, and reported its conduct to a ſuperior counſel; or where the ſuperior counſel compoſed of four deputies from each republic, and principally occupied with the affairs of war and politics, ſhould be yet charged with obſerving that none of thoſe republics changed its legiſlation without the conſent of all the others: and where, moreover, the object of the laws ſhould be to improve the minds, exalt the courage, and preſerve an exact diſcipline in their armies: if on ſuch ſuppoſition the whole body of the republics would not be ſufficiently powerful to oppoſe efficaciouſly any ambitious projects of their neighbours, or of their fellow-citizens *.

23. If on the hypotheſis that the legiſlation of thoſe republics would render the people as happy

* The injuſtice of man has in general no other meaſure than that of power. The maſter piece of legiſlation therefore conſiſts in ſo confining the power of each citizen, that he may never attack with impunity the life, liberty, or property of another. Now this problem has been hitherto no where better reſolved than in England.

as poſſible, and procure them all the pleaſures compatible with the public welfare, if theſe ſame republics would not then be morally certain of an unalterable felicity?

24. If the plan of a good legiſlation ought not to include that of an excellent education; if ſuch an education can be given a people without preſenting them with clear ideas of morality, and without deriving its precepts from the ſole principle of a love for the general good: if by making men in this manner recollect the motives that united them in ſociety, it might not be proved to them, that it is almoſt always their real intereſt to ſacrifice a perſonal and momentary advantage to the national advantage, and by that ſacrifice to merit the title of honourable and virtuous citizens?

25. If morality can be founded on any other principles than thoſe of public utility? If even the injuſtice committed by deſpotiſm, being always in the name of the public good, does not prove that this is the ſole principle of morality *: and

* When the monk enjoins the love of God before all things, he conſtantly identifies himſelf and his church with God, and therefore ſays nothing more than that we ought to love and reſpect him and his church before all things. He alone is the true friend to his country, who ſays, after the philoſophers, that every love ought to give place to that of juſtice and the public good.

if the private advantages of family and relations can be ſubſtituted for it *?

26. If on the ſuppoſition that the axiom which ſays, *that we owe more to our relations than to our country*, is to be held ſacred, a father with a deſign to preſerve his family might not abandon his poſt at the hour of battle; and if intruſted with the public money, he might not embezzle it to maintain his children, and thus plunder what he ought to love the moſt, to enrich what he ought to love the leaſt.

27. If whenever the public welfare is not the ſupreme law, and the firſt obligation of a citizen †, there ſtill ſubſiſts a ſcience of good and evil; in ſhort, if there be any morality where the public good is not the meaſure of reward and puniſh-

* If a man do not regard the love of his country as the firſt principle of morality, he may be a good father, huſband, and ſon, but will always be a bad citizen. What crimes have the love of relations occaſioned!

† Are men inſenſible to the evils a bad adminiſtration occaſion, and but weakly affected with the diſhonour of their nation? Do they not partake the ſhame of its defeats and its ſlavery? They are vile and daſtardly citizens. To be virtuous, they muſt be wretched in the miſery of their fellow-citizens. If there were in the Eaſt a man whoſe ſoul was truly honeſt and noble, he would paſs his days in tears; he would have for moſt of the vizirs, the ſame horror that they formerly had in France for Bullion, who when Lewis XIII. began to be affected by the miſeries of his ſubjects, made him this atrocious reply: "Your people are yet happy enough that they "are not reduced to feed on the graſs."

ment,

ment, of the eſteem or contempt due to the actions of citizens?

28. If men can flatter themſelves with finding virtuous citizens in a country where honours, riches, and reputation are, by the form of government, the rewards of crimes; where, in a word, vice is reſpected and proſperous?

29. If men then reflecting that the deſire of happineſs is the ſole motive of their union, have not a right to abandon themſelves to vice, whereever vice will procure them honour, wealth and felicity?

30. If on the ſuppoſition that laws, as is proved by the conſtitution of the Jeſuits, can do all things with men, it be poſſible for a people, led to vice by the form of their government, to free themſelves from it without ſome alterations in thoſe laws?

31. If it be enough for a government to be good, that it make the inhabitants ſecure in their properties, lives, and liberties, make a more equal partition of the riches of a nation, and enable the people more eaſily to obtain by a moderate labour *, a ſufficiency for themſelves and

* To regard the neceſſity of labour as the conſequence of an original ſin, and a puniſhment from God, is an abſurdity. This neceſſity is, on the contrary, a favour from heaven. That man muſt live by the ſweat of his brow is a fact. Now to explain a fact ſo ſimple, what neceſſity is there to have recourſe to ſupernatural cauſes, and conſtantly repreſent man as an enigma? If he appeared ſuch formerly, it muſt be owned that the

their families, if the legiſlation do not at the ſame time alſo exalt in the minds of men the ſentiment of emulation, and for this effect that the ſtate do not propoſe large rewards for great talents and great virtues; and if theſe rewards, always conſiſting of certain ſuperfluities, and which were formerly the ſource of ſo many great and noble actions*, might not again produce the ſame effects; and if the rewards decreed by government (of what nature ſoever they be) can be regarded as a luxury of pleaſure adapted to corrupt the manners of the people?

the principle of ſelf-intereſt has been ſince ſo generally received, it has been ſo clearly proved that intereſt is the principle of all our thoughts and actions, that the meaning of the enigma is at leaſt made out, and to explain man, it is no longer neceſſary, as Paſcal pretended, to recur to original ſin.

* The general principles of our actions are the hope or fear of an approaching pleaſure or pain. Men almoſt always indifferent to remote evils take no pains to avoid them. He who is not unhappy thinks himſelf in his natural ſtate, and that he can always remain ſo. The utility of a law preſervative from future evil is rarely perceived. How often have nations been ready to ſuffer the extinction of certain privileges that alone preſerve them from ſlavery? Liberty, like health, is a bleſſing whoſe value is commonly not known till it is loſt. Nations, in general, too little anxious for their liberty, have by their indifference frequently furniſhed tyranny with the means of deſtroying it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of the luxury of pleaſure.

WE every day hear of *the corruption of national manners*, what are we to underſtand by thoſe words? The detachment of private from public intereſt.

Why does money, that active principle of a rich nation, ſo often become the principle of corruption? Becauſe the public, as I have already ſaid, is not the ſole diſtributer, and that money in conſequence ſo often becomes the reward of vice. It is not ſo with the rewards of which the public is the ſole diſpenſer. Always an acknowledgment of the public gratitude, it conſtantly ſuppoſes a ſervice, a benefaction rendered to our country, and conſequently a virtuous action. Such a gift, of whatever nature it be, therefore conſtantly ſtrengthens the bond between private and public intereſt.

If either a beautiful ſlave or concubine become among a people the reward of talents,, virtue, or valour, the manners of that people will not be thereby corrupted. It was in the heroic ages the Cretans impoſed on the Athenians the tribute of ten beautiful virgins, from which Theſeus freed them. It was in the ages of their glory and

and triumphs that the Arabs and Turks exacted ſimilar tributes of the nations they conquered.

When we read the Celtic poems and romances, thoſe hiſtories, always true, of the manners of a people yet ferocious, we ſee the Celts arm, in the ſame manner as the Greeks, for the conqueſt of beauty; and that love, far from enervating their manners, excited them to the boldeſt enterprizes.

Any pleaſure whatever, if it be propoſed as the reward of great talents or virtues, may excite the emulation of the people and become the principle of activity and of national happineſs. But to effect this, it is neceſſary that all the inhabitants may equally pretend to it, and that thoſe pleaſures being equitably diſpenſed, may be conſtantly the recompence of whoever ſhews the greateſt talents in council, the greateſt valour in the field, or virtue in private life.

Suppoſe that banquets were inſtituted, and that, to rouſe the emulation of the citizens, none were admitted to them but men diſtinguiſhed by their genius, their talents or their actions; nothing would more excite a deſire to excel than the hope of obtaining a place at theſe feſtivals. This deſire would be the ſtronger as the beauty of theſe entertainments would be neceſſarily augmented by the vanity of thoſe that were admitted, and by the ignorance of thoſe that were excluded.

But, they will ſay, how many would be made unhappy by their excluſion? Fewer than is imagined.

gined. If all envy a reward that may be obtained by intrigue and influence, it is becauſe all can pretend to that, but few deſire thoſe rewards that cannot be obtained without great labour and great danger.

Far from envying the laurels of Achilles or Homer, the poltroon and the ſluggard deſpiſe them*. Their conſolator, vanity, will not permit them to ſee in men of great talents or great valour, any thing more than fools, whoſe pay, like that of ſappers and miners, ought to be high, becauſe they expoſe themſelves to great dangers and great labours. It is wiſe and juſt, ſay the poltroon and the ſluggard, to pay ſuch men generouſly, but it would be folly to imitate them.

Envy is common to all, but is a real torment to thoſe only who run the ſame career; and if envy be to them an evil, it is a neceſſary evil.

But we would ſee, they will ſay, after ſuch a profound knowledge of the human heart and underſtanding, the problem of an excellent legiſlation clearly reſolved, that there may be excited in all the citizens ſuch principles of activity and application as may lead them to great actions, and in ſhort may render them as happy as poſſible.

* Nothing is in general leſs envied by men of faſhion than the talents of a Voltaire or a Turenne; the little efforts they make to attain them, proves in what little eſteem they hold them.

A legiſlation ſo perfect would be ſtill nothing more than a palace built upon the ſand, and the natural inconſtancy of man would ſoon overthrow that edifice, elevated by a genius, humanity, and virtue.

CHAP. IV.

The true cauſes of the alterations that happen in the laws of different nations.

ARE the many changes that have happened in the different forms of governments to be regarded as the effect of the inconſtancy of mankind? What I know of the matter is, that with regard to cuſtoms, laws, and prejudices, it is of the obſtinacy, and not of the inconſtancy of the human mind, that we ought to complain. How much time is often required to convince a nation that a religion is falſe, and deſtructive of the national felicity! How much time to aboliſh a law that is abſurd and contrary to the public good!

To produce ſuch alterations it is not enough to be a king; but a courageous and diſcerning king, and at the ſame time to be aſſiſted by favourable circumſtances.

The eternity, as it may be called, of the laws and cuſtoms of China depoſe againſt the pretended

tened legerity of nations. But ſuppoſing man to be as inconſtant as he is repreſented, it would be in the courſe of his life he would manifeſt his inconſtancy. By what cauſe in fact ſhould laws reſpected by the grandfather, father, and ſon, laws that have laſted generations, be aboliſhed at once by man's ſuppoſed legerity?

Let ſuch laws be eſtabliſhed as are conformable to the general intereſt; and though they may be deſtroyed by force, ſedition, or a concurrence of ſingular circumſtances, they never will by the inconſtancy of the human mind *.

I know that laws good in appearance, but evil in effect, are ſooner or later aboliſhed. Why? Becauſe in a given time there muſt ariſe a man of diſcernment, who, ſtruck with the incompatibility of ſuch laws with the general happineſs, will communicate his diſcovery to the juſt ſpirits of his age.

A diſcovery of this ſort, from the ſlowneſs with which truth is propagated, is communicated but

* The work of the laws, they ſay, ſhould be permanent. Now why are the Saracens, formerly animated by ſtrong paſſions that often raiſed them above themſelves, no longer what they formerly were? Becauſe their courage and their genius was not the conſequence of their legiſlation, of the union of public and private intereſt, nor conſequently the effect of a wiſe diſtribution of temporal pains and puniſhments. Their virtues had not a foundation ſo ſolid: they were the produce of a momentary and religious enthuſiaſm, which neceſſarily diſappeared with the concourſe of ſingular circumſtances that gave it birth.

by ſmall intervals, not generally acknowledged till the ſucceeding generation. Therefore if ancient laws be thus aboliſhed, it is not the effect of the inconſtancy of mankind, but of the diſcernment of their minds.

When laws are known to be bad, or inſufficient, and are only ſupported by ancient cuſtom, the leaſt pretence is ſufficient to deſtroy them, and the leaſt event will procure it. Is it ſo with laws really uſeful? No: for which reaſon no extenſive and poliſhed nation has aboliſhed thoſe that puniſh murder, robbery, &c.

But the ſo much admired legiſlation of Lycurgus, which was taken in part from that of Minos *, laſted only five or ſix hundred years. It

* There are few who believe with Xenophon in the happineſs of Sparta. What a rueful occupation, they ſay, is that of military exerciſes. What perpetually in arms! Sparta, they add, was nothing more than a convent. All was there regulated by the ſound of a bell. But, I anſwer, does not the ſound of the bell for recreation pleaſe the ſcholar? Is it the bell that renders the monk miſerable? When we are well cloathed and fed, and free from diſcontent, every occupation is equally good, and the moſt perilous are not the leaſt agreeable. The hiſtory of the Goths, the Huns, &c. prove this truth.

A Roman ambaſſador entered the camp of Attila, and heard the bard celebrate the great actions of the conqueror. He ſaw the young people ranged round the poet, admire his verſes, and jump with tranſport at the recital of their victories; while the old men tore their hair, and exclaimed with tears, *How wretched is our fate! Deprived of ſtrength to fight, there is no longer any happineſs for us.*

is true: and perhaps it could not laſt longer †. However excellent the laws of Lycurgus were, and with whatever genius, patriotic virtue, and courage they might inſpire the Spartans ‡, it

Felicity therefore inhabits the plains of war as well as the aſylums of peace. Why then regard the Lacedæmonians as unhappy? Is there any want they did not gratify? They were it is ſaid, badly fed. As a proof of the contrary they were robuſt and healthful. If moreover they paſſed their days in exerciſes that amuſed without too much fatiguing them, the Spartans were nearly as happy as they could be, and much more ſo than weak and meagre peaſants, or idle, rich, and diſcontented citizens.

† The inſtitutions of Lycurgus, though inſenſibly altered, were not entirely deſtroyed but by force. The Romans did not think they had ſubdued the Spartans till they had aboliſhed from among them the remains of that inſtitution which rendered them ſtill redoubtable to the maſters of the world.

‡ The Lacedæmonians have been celebrated in all ages and hiſtories for their virtue. They have been however frequently reproached with obduracy to their ſlaves. Theſe republicans, ſo proud of their liberty, and ſo haughty in their bravery, in fact treated their ſlaves with as much cruelty as the Europeans now treat their Negroes. The Spartans muſt conſequently appear virtuous or vicious, according to the point of view in which they are regarded.

Does virtue conſiſt in the love of our country and fellow-citizens? The Spartans were perhaps the moſt virtuous of all nations.

Does virtue conſiſt in an univerſal love of mankind? The Spartans were vicious.

How then are we to form a juſt judgment of them? Examine if at the time that all mankind form but one nation, as the Abbé St. Pierre wiſhed, it be poſſible for the patriotic love to be diſtinct from univerſal love.

If the happineſs of one nation be not to the preſent time annexed to the unhappineſs of another: if we can, for example, improve the manufactures of one nation without injuring the commerce

was impoſſible, in the ſituation Lacedæmon then was, that its legiſlation ſhould remain longer unaltered.

The Spartans, too few to reſiſt the Perſians, would have been ſooner or later overwhelmed by the vaſt body of their armies, if Greece, at that time ſo fruitful in great men, had not united its forces to repel the common enemy. What was the conſequence? That Athens and Sparta were then placed at the head of the Grecian confederacy. Scarce had theſe two republics by equal efforts of conduct and courage triumphed over the Perſians, than the admiration of the univerſe was divided between them, and this admiration ought and did become the foundation of their jealouſy and diſcord. This jealouſy would have produced nothing more than a noble emulation between the two republics, if they had been governed by the ſame laws; if the limits of their territories had been fixed by immutable bounds; if they had been able to extend them without arming all the other republics againſt them; and laſtly, if they had known no other riches than the iron money of which Lycurgus had permitted the uſe.

commerce of its neighbours, and expoſing their workmen to die of hunger. Now what matters it, when we deſtroy men, whether it be by the ſword or by hunger? *It is certainly much the beſt to deſtroy them by the ſword, as their ſufferings will then be much ſhorter.*

The confederation of the Greeks was not founded on ſo ſolid a baſis. Each republic had its particular conſtitution. The Athenians were at once warriors and merchants. The wealth gained by commerce enabled them to carry the war into other countries; and in this reſpect they had a great advantage over the Lacedæmonians.

The latter, poor and proud, ſaw with concern within what narrow bounds their poverty confined their ambition. The deſire to command, a deſire ſo powerful in two rival and warlike republics, rendered their poverty inſupportable to the Spartans. They therefore became inſenſibly diſguſted with the laws of Lycurgus, and contracted alliances with the Aſiatic powers.

The Peloponneſan war then kindled, and they felt more forcibly the want of money; Perſia offered it, and they accepted it. It was then that poverty, the key-ſtone of the edifice of the laws Lycurgus had conſtructed, fell from the arch, and its fall was followed by that of the ſtate. Then their laws and manners changed, and this change, as well as the conſequential evils, were not the effect of the inconſtancy of the human mind *, but of the different forms of go-

* It is not the inconſtancy of nations, but their ignorance, that ſo frequently overthrows the edifice of the beſt laws. It is that renders a people tractable to the counſels of ambitious men. If the true principles of morality be ſhown to a people, and if the excellence of their laws, and the happineſs they produce

vernment among the Greeks; of the imperfection in the principles of their confederation, and of the liberty they always reſerved to make war on each other. From hence that ſeries of events which at laſt led to their common ruin.

A federative compact ought to be founded on the moſt ſolid principles. If a country, as large as France or Paraguay, were to be divided into thirty republics *: if theſe republics, governed by the ſame laws, were leagued together againſt a foreign enemy: if the bounds of their territories were invariably determined; if they reſpectively guaranty'd each other their poſſeſſions and their

produce be demonſtrated to them, thoſe laws will be held ſacred by them: they will reverence them from a love of the felicity they produce, and from that obſtinate attachment men in general have for ancient cuſtoms.

There are no innovations propoſed by the ambitious that that are not coloured with the pretext of public advantage. An intelligent people, always guarded againſt ſuch innovations, will always reject them. Among them the intereſt of a ſmall number that are ſtrong is reſtrained by the intereſt of a great number that are weak. The ambition of the former is therefore confined, and the people, always the ſtrongeſt when they are intelligent, will remain faithful to the legiſlation that renders them happy.

* Paraguay is an immenſe country. In the time of the Jeſuits this country, if we believe certain accounts, was divided into thirty cantons, governed by the ſame laws, and the ſame magiſtrates, that is, by the ſame ſort of monks. Now if theſe thirty cantons formed but one empire, whoſe forces could, by order of the Jeſuits, be united againſt a common enemy, and if the exiſtence of a fact demonſtrates its poſſibility, the ſuppreſſion of ſuch an empire cannot be abſurd.

liberties; if they moreover, adopted the laws and manners of the Spartans; the junction of their forces and the mutual guaranty of their liberties, would secure them equally from the invasion of foreigners and the tyranny of their compatriots.

Now supposing this legislation the most proper to render the people happy, what means are there to secure its perpetual duration? The most certain would be, to order preceptors in their instructions, and magistrates in their public discourses, to demonstrate its excellence *; which being once established, the legislation would be proof against the inconstancy of the human mind. Men (were they so inconstant as commonly imagined) could not abro-

* It is necessary, says Machiavel, from time to time, to call back governments to their constituent principles. How is this to be done? By misfortune. It was the ambition of Appius, and the battles of Cannæ and Trasimena, that recalled the Romans to a love for their country. Nations have in this matter no other master but misfortune. They might find one less severe.

For the instruction even of magistrates, why do they not every year, read publicly the history of each law, and the motives of its establishment, and point out to the people those laws to which they principally owe the preservation of their property, liberty and lives? The people love happiness. They would at this lecture, discover the sagacity of their ancestors, and frequently see that laws, in appearance the least important, protect them from indigence and despotism.

Whatever be the pretended inconstancy of the human mind, when a nation is made clearly to perceive the reciprocal dependence between their happiness and the preservation of their laws, their inconstancy is sure to be restrained.

gate

gate eſtabliſhed laws, unleſs they were united in their purſuits. Now ſuch union ſuppoſes them to have a common intereſt in the deſtruction, and conſequently a great imperfection in the laws.

In every other caſe the very inconſtancy of mankind, by dividing their opinions, oppoſes the unanimity of their deliberations, and conſequently ſecures the duration of the laws.

O! Sovereigns, make your ſubjects happy! Conſider what will, from their infancy, inſpire them with a love for the public welfare; prove to them the goodneſs of their laws, by the hiſtory of all times, and the miſery of all nations. Demonſtrate to them (for morality is capable of demonſtration) that your adminiſtration is the beſt poſſible, and you will for ever reſtrain their pretended inconſtancy.

If the government of the Chineſe, imperfect as it may be, ſtill ſubſiſts, and ſubſiſts the ſame, what can deſtroy that where men are the moſt happy poſſible? Nothing but conqueſt, or the miſeries of a people change the form of governments.

Every wiſe legiſlation that unites private and public intereſt, and founds virtue on the advantage of each individual, is indeſtructible. But is ſuch legiſlation poſſible? Why not. The horizon of our ideas is every day extended; and if

legiſlation, like the other ſciences, participates of the progreſs of the human mind, why deſpair of the future felicity of mankind? Why may not nations, as they become every age more enlightened, one day arrive at that plenitude of happineſs of which they are capable? It is not without pain that I quit this hope. The felicity of the human race is to a ſenſible mind the moſt pleaſing of all proſpects. When we behold it through the perſpective of futurity, it is the work of a perfect legiſlation. But if any ſhould be hardy enough to lay down the plan, what prejudices, they will ſay, will he not have to combat and deſtroy! What dangerous truths to reveal!

CHAP. V.

The publication of a truth is fatal to him only by whom it is publiſhed.

WHAT is a new truth in morality? A new method of ſecuring or increaſing the happineſs of nations. What follows from this definition? That truth cannot be prejudicial.

When an author makes a diſcovery of this kind, who are his enemies?

1. Thoſe he contradicts (1).
2. They that envy his reputation.

3. They

3. They whoſe intereſts are oppoſite to that of the public.

If a magiſtrate increaſe the number of patroles, his enemies will be the robbers on the highway; and if thoſe robbers be powerful, the magiſtrate will be perſecuted. It is the ſame with the philoſopher. If his precepts tend to ſecure the happineſs of the people in general, he will have for his enemies the robbers of the ſtate; and theſe are to be feared.

Do I diſcover the intrigues of an avaricious clergy, and diſconcert the projects of monachal avidity and ambition? If the monk be powerful, I ſhall be perſecuted.

Do I prove the malverſations of the man in power? If my proof be clear, I ſhall be puniſhed. The vengeance of the ſtrong over the weak is always in proportion to the truth of the accuſations. It was of the powerful (2), Menippus ſaid, "You are angry, Jupiter, you graſp the thunder, but you are wrong." The powerful are commonly cruel in proportion as they are ſtupid. Let a Turk enter the divan, and declare, that the intolerance of Mahometaniſm depopulates the ſtate and alienates the Greeks: that the deſpotiſm of the Grand Signior debaſes the nation; that the vexations of the pachas diſpirit the people; and that the want of diſcipline renders the army deſpicable: what name will they give this faithful citizen? That of ſeditious. He will be delivered

delivered up to the mutes. Death is at Conſtantinople the puniſhment inflicted for revealing a truth, that reflected on by the Sultan would ſave the empire from the ruin that threatens it. The love for virtue which is there ſometimes affected, is always falſe. In deſpotic countries all is hypocriſy; we ſee nothing but maſks; no face appears.

In every country where the people are not the ruling power (and in what country are they ?) the advocate for the public felicity is the martyr of the truths he reveals. What is the cauſe of this? The too great power of ſome members of ſociety. If a man preſents a new opinion to the public: ſtruck with the novelty, and for ſome time undetermined, the public at firſt forms no judgment of it. At that time if the cry of envy, ignorance, and intereſt are raiſed againſt the author of the truth; and he be not protected either by the law, or by people in power, he is loſt.

An illuſtrious man therefore always purchaſes his future glory by preſent misfortune. For the reſt, his misfortunes themſelves, and the perſecution he ſuffers, more rapidly diffuſe his diſcoveries. Truth, always inſtructive to him who hears it, is detrimental only to him who tells it *.

* Every truth, ſays the proverb, is not proper to be told. But what is meant by the word *proper?* It means the ſame as *ſafe*. He who ſpeaks the truth doubtleſs expoſes himſelf to perſecution,

In morality, it is on a knowledge of the truth that the public felicity depends.

O! Truth, thou art the divinity of noble ſouls! Virtue can never impute to thee the deſtructions of empires, and the miſeries of mankind. Vices are not the bitter fruits that are gathered from thy branches. When truth ſhall enlighten princes, happineſs and virtue will reign under them in every empire.

CHAP. VI.

That a knowledge of the truth is always uſeful.

MAN always follows his intereſt, or what he thinks his intereſt. It is a known fact *that whether we talk or not, the conduct of man will be always the ſame.* The publication of this truth is not therefore prejudicial. But of what utility can it be? Of the greateſt. Being once aſſured that man always acts in conformity to his intereſt, the legiſlature may aſſign ſo many puniſhments to vice, and ſo many rewards to virtue, that every individual will find it his intereſt to be virtuous.

perſecution, and is imprudent. Imprudent men are therefore the moſt uſeful ſort of men. They ſow, at their own expence, truths of which their fellow-citizens reap the fruit. The labour is for them and the profit for others; they have therefore been ever regarded as the friends of humanity. It was for others that Curtius leaped into the gulf.

Does the legiſlature know that man, anxious for his preſervation, expoſes himſelf with averſion to danger? It may annex ſo much infamy to cowardice and ſo much honour to courage, that the ſoldier on the day of battle will find it more his intereſt to fight than to fly.

Suppoſe a man, directed ſolely by caprice, ſhould diſſipate his fortune and leave his children in indigence; what remedy is there for this evil? The contempt with which he ought to be treated. When man and the crimes he may commit are made known to other men, they will create laws proper to ſupreſs thoſe crimes *, and will at laſt come to connect private and public intereſt ſo cloſely, that men will be neceſſitated to virtue.

In every ſcience, they ſay, a writer ought to ſearch out and publiſh the truth. Muſt the ſcience of morality be an exception? What is the object of ethics? The happineſs of the majority. In this reſpect every new truth is, as I have ſaid, a new mean of meliorating the condition of the people. Is the deſire of their happineſs a crime? Such an opinion cannot be maintained but by the fool void of humanity, and the knave intereſted in the calamities of the public.

* The legiſlature in making laws, ſuppoſes all men to be wicked, becauſe it would have them all equally ſubject to theſe laws.

fool

In morality it is the truth alone that ſhould be taught. But may we in no caſe ſubſtitute uſeful errors? There are none ſuch; as I ſhall hereafter demonſtrate. Religion itſelf does not make a people happy. The modern Romans are a proof of this. Intereſt is our ſole motive. Men ſometimes appear to ſacrifice, but never really ſacrifice their happineſs to that of others. The waters never remount to their ſource, nor man againſt the rapid current of his intereſt. He that ſhould attempt it would be a fool. Such fools are moreover too few to have any influence on the bulk of ſociety. If it be only required to make virtuous citizens, what need is there to have recourſe to impoſſible and ſupernatural methods?

Make good laws; they alone will naturally direct the people in the purſuit of the public advantage, by following the irreſiſtible propenſity they have to their privae advantage. It is not the vices of intemperance and improbity, that make a people miſerable, but the imperfection and conſequently the ſtupidity of their laws. It is of little conſequence that men be vicious; it is enough that they be intelligent. An awful and ſalutary fear will keep them within the bounds of their duty. Thieves have laws among themſelves, and few of them violate thoſe laws, becauſe they inſpect and ſuſpect each other. Laws do all. If ſome God, ſay on this ſubject

the

the philoſophers of Siam, were really to deſcend from heaven to inſtruct mankind in the ſcience of morality, he would give them a good legiſlation, and that legiſlation would neceſſitate them to virtue. In morals, as in phyſics, it is always in great, and by ſimple methods, that the Divinity operates.

It reſults from this chapter, that truth, often odious to the powerful and unjuſt, is always uſeful to the public. But are there not periods when its promulgation may produce troubles in an empire?

CHAP. VII.

That the promulgation of truth can never produce troubles in an empire.

AN adminiſtration is bad, the people ſuffer, they complain. At that moment a writing appears that ſhews them all their miſery. The people are irritated and riſe. Be it ſo. But is the writing the cauſe of their inſurrection? No: it is the epoch only. The cauſe is the public miſery. If the writing had appeared ſooner, the government by being ſooner informed might have alleviated the ſufferings of the people, and prevented the ſedition. The trouble does not accompany the promulgation of the truth, except in countries entirely deſpotic; becauſe in thoſe countries

countries the time at which men dare to ſpeak the truth, is that when the miſeries of the people, becoming inſupportable, they are no longer able to reſtrain their complaints.

When a government becomes cruel to exceſs, their troubles are ſalutary. They are the pangs a medicine give the patient it heals. To free a people from ſervitude ſometimes fewer men are ſacrificed than periſh at a public rejoicing badly conducted. The evil of an inſurrection is in the cauſe that produces it: the pain of a criſis is in the diſorder that excites it. When men fall under deſpotiſm, they muſt make efforts to ſhake it off, and thoſe efforts are, at that period, the only property the unfortunate people have left. The height of miſery is not to be able to free ourſelves from it, and to ſuffer without daring to complain. Where is the man barbarous and ſtupid enough to give the name of peace to the ſilence, the forced tranquility of ſlavery! It is indeed peace, but it is the peace of the tomb.

The publication of a truth is therefore ſometimes the epoch, but never the cauſe of diſorders and inſurrections. The knowledge of the truth is always uſeful to the oppreſſed, and even to the oppreſſors. It informs them, as I have ſaid, of the diſcontents of the people. In Europe the murmurs of a people precede their revolt at a great diſtance.

The

The complaints of a nation is the thunder heard at a diſtance, and not yet to be feared. The ſovereign has yet time to repair his injuſtice, and to reconcile himſelf with his people. It is not ſo in a country of ſlaves. It is with the poignard in hand the remonſtrance is preſented to the Sultan. The ſilence of ſlaves is terrible. It is the ſilence before a hurricane. The winds are yet huſhed. But from the dark boſom of an immoveable cloud darts the thunder, the ſignal of the tempeſt, which ſtrikes at the moment the flaſh appears.

The ſilence that force compels is the principal cauſe of the miſeries of nations, and of the deſtruction of their oppreſſors. If the ſearch after truth be hurtful, it is never to any one but its author. This Buffon, Queſnoy, and Monteſquieu have found. Men have long diſputed about the preference to be given to the ancients or moderns: to the French or Italian muſic: thoſe diſputes have enlightened the people without arming any one citizen. But thoſe diſputes, they will ſay, relate to frivolous objects only. Be it ſo. But without a fear of the law men would cut each others throats for trifles. Theological diſputes, always reducible to queſtions about words, are proofs of this. What ſtreams of blood have they occaſioned. Can I, with the ſanction of the law, give the name of holy zeal to the fury of my vanity? There is no exceſs to which it will not lead me. Religious cruelty is atrocious.

From

From whence does is proceed? Can it be from the novelty of a theologic opinion (3). No: from the licentious and unpuniſhable uſe of intolerance (4).

In diſcuſſing a queſtion where every one is free to deliver his ſentiments, and to contradict, and be contradicted in turn, if any one that inſults another be puniſhed according to the degree of the offence; the pride of the diſputant being thus reſtrained by the law, ceaſes to be inhuman.

But by what inconſiſtency does the magiſtrate, who ties the hands of the citizens and forbids them acts of violence in diſcuſſing a matter of intereſt or opinion, untie them in a ſcholaſtic diſpute? To what is this owing? To the ſpirit of ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm, which preſide much oftener at the formation of laws than the ſpirit of juſtice and humanity.

I have read the hiſtories of the different forms of worſhip; I have enumerated their abſurdities; I have been aſhamed of human reaſon, and bluſhed to be a man. I am aſtoniſhed at the evils that ſuperſtition has produced, and at the facility with which that fanaticiſm might be ſtifled, which will ever render religions ſo fatal to mankind (5); and I have concluded that the miſeries of the people may always be referred to the imperfection of their laws, and conſequently to the ignorance of ſome moral truths. Theſe truths, always uſeful,

cannot disturb the peace of states, of which the slowness of their progress is another proof.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the slowness with which truth is propagated.

THE advances of truth are slow, as experience proves.

When did the parliament of Paris revoke the punishment of death decreed to every one who should teach any other philosophy than that of Aristotle?

Fifty years after that philosophy was forgot.

When did the faculty of medicine admit the doctrine of the circulation of the blood?

Fifty years after its discovery by Harvey.

When did the same faculty admit potatoes to be wholesome?

A hundred years after it had been proved by experience, and when the parliament had revoked the arret which forbad the use of that root *.

* The parliament issued a like decree against the emetics, and against Brissot the physician, in the sixteenth century. That physician, contrary to the common practice, bled in the pleurisy on the side where the patient suffered most. This new practice was denounced to parliament by the old physicians. He was declared impious, and forbid to bleed for the future on the side where the pleurisy was. The affair being reported to Charles V. he was going to issue a similar decree, but it happened at the instant that Charles III. duke of Savoy died of the pleurisy after having been bled in the ancient

When will phyſicians agree about the advantages of inoculation? In twenty years, or thereabout.

A hundred facts of this nature prove the ſlow progreſs of truth; its progreſs however is ſuch as it ought to be.

A truth by being new always ſhocks ſome opinion or cuſtom generally eſtabliſhed: it has at firſt but few partizans: it is treated as a paradox *, cited as an error, and rejected without being underſtood. Mankind in general approve or condemn by chance; and truth itſelf is received by moſt of them like error, from prejudice, and without examination.

By what method then does a new opinion come to be generally known? When men of ſound underſtanding have diſcovered the truth, they make it public; it is thus promulgated, and becoming every day more common is at laſt generally received; but it is a long time after its diſcovery, eſpecially if it be a moral truth.

cient manner. Is it for magiſtrates to pretend, like the theologians, to judge of books and ſciences they know nothing about. What do they get by it? Ridicule.

* If an excellent work of philoſophy appear, the firſt judgement envy forms of it is, that its pricicipies are falſe and dangerous; the ſecond, that the ideas it contains are common. Unlucky is the work on which too much praiſe is beſtowed at firſt. The ſilence of envy and ſtupidity declare its want of merit.

The reaſon why men with ſo much difficulty aſſent to moral truths, is becauſe they ſometimes require the ſacrifice not only of our prejudices, but of our perſonal intereſt alſo; and few men are capable of this double oblation. Beſide, a truth of this ſort diſcovered by a fellow-citizen may ſpread rapidly, and load him with honours. Our envy therefore would be ſhocked by its ſucceſs, and ought to haſten its condemnation. It is the ſtranger who now celebrates the moral works wrote and proſcribed in France. To judge theſe books a man ſhould be endowed at once with a degree of diſcernment and a degree of unconcern neceſſary to diſtinguiſh the true from the falſe. Now every where men of diſcernment are rare, and diſintereſted men, ſtill rarer, are to be found only among foreigners. Moral truths are propagated by very ſlow undulations. It is, if I may ſo ſay, with the progreſs of the truth on the earth, as with the fall of a ſtone in a lake: the water ſeparates at the point of contact, and forms a circle that is ſoon ſurrounded by a greater, and that by circles more large and continually increaſing, till at laſt they break againſt the ſhore. It is thus from circle to circle that a moral truth, extending to the different claſſes of citizens, comes at laſt to be acknowledged by all who have no intereſt in rejecting it.

To eſtabliſh a truth it is ſufficient that men in power do not oppoſe its promulgation; and

and it is in this that truth differs from error. It is by force the latter is propagated: it is by the ſword in hand that the truth of almoſt all religions is authenticated, and it is by that they become the ſcourge of the moral world.

Truth without the aid of force is certainly eſtabliſhed but ſlowly, but at the ſame time without commotion. The only people among whom truth finds a difficult admittance, are the ignorant nations. Idiotiſm is much leſs tractable than is commonly imagined.

If an uſeful but new law be propoſed to an ignorant people (6), that law, by being rejected without examination, may even excite a ſedition (7). For a people who are ſtupid becauſe they are ſlaves, are the more irritable from being frequently irritated by deſpotiſm.

If on the contrary the ſame law be propoſed to an enlightened people, where the preſs is free, where its utility is foreſeen and its promulgation deſired, it will be there received with gratitude by the intelligent part of the nation, and that part will reſtrain the other.

It reſults from this chapter that truth, even by the ſlowneſs with which it is propagated, cannot produce diſorder in a ſtate. But are there not forms of government, to which a knowlege of the truth may be dangerous?

CHAP. IX.

Of governments.

IF every moral truth be nothing more than *a method of increasing or securing the happiness of the majority, and if the object of all government be the public felicity*, there can be no moral truth whose publication is not desirable (8). All diversity of opinion on this subject arises from the vague signification of the word *government*, What is government? An assemblage of laws or conventions made between the people of the same nation. Therefore these laws and conventions are either conformable or contrary to the general interest. There are therefore only two forms of government, the one good, the other bad: it is to these two sorts I reduce them all. Now in the assemblage of conventions by which they are constituted, to say that we cannot alter laws detrimental to a nation; that they are sacred, and cannot be legitimately laid aside, is to say that we cannot alter a regimen detrimental to health, and that a wound should not be cleansed, but suffered to gangrene (9).

If all government, moreover, of whatever nature it be, can have no other object than the happiness of the majority, nothing that tends to render them happy can be contrary to their government

ment (10). He alone can oppoſe every uſeful reformation in the ſtate, who, founding his grandeur on the debaſement and miſery of his fellow-citizens, would uſurp an arbitrary power over them. But the honeſt man, the friend of truth and of his country, can have no intereſt contrary to that of his nation. When we are happy in the happineſs of an empire, and glorious in its glory, we ſecretly deſire the correction of every abuſe. A ſcience is not annihilated by being improved, nor a government deſtroyed by being reformed.

Suppoſe that in Portugal more reſpect were had to the property, the lives, and liberty of the ſubjects, would the government be leſs monarchical. Suppoſe they were there to ſuppreſs the inquiſition, and the lettres de cachet, and limit the exerciſe and authority of certain places, would they thereby change the form of government? No: they would correct its abuſes only. What virtuous monarch would not promote ſuch reformation! Are the monarchs of Europe to be compared to the ſtupid ſultans of Aſia, to thoſe vampires who ſuck the blood of their ſubjects, and whom all oppoſition exaſperates? To ſuſpect a virtuous prince of adopting the principles of oriental deſpotiſm, is to do him the moſt atrocious injury. A diſcerning ſovereign will never eſteem an arbitrary power, whether it be of one, as in Turkey; or of ſeveral, as in Poland, to be the real conſtitution of a ſtate; to honour a cruel deſpotiſm

with that title, is to give the name of government to a gang of robbers (11), who, under the banner of one, or ſeveral, ravage the provinces they inhabit.

Every act of an arbitrary power is unjuſt. A power acquired and maintained by force (12), is a power that force has a right to repel. A nation, whatever name its enemy may bear, has a right to attack and deſtroy it.

To conclude; if the object of the ſciences, of morality, and politics be reduced to the ſearch after means of rendering men happy, there are no truths of this ſort whoſe knowledge is dangerous.

But does the happineſs of a people conſtitute that of a ſovereign?

CHAP. X.

The happineſs of the prince is not connected with the miſery of the people, under any form of government.

THAT arbitrary right for which ſome monarchs appear ſo anxious, is nothing more than a luxury of power, which, without adding any thing to their own happineſs, makes their people miſerable. The happineſs of a prince is independent of his deſpotiſm. It is frequently in compliance to his favourites, for the pleaſure or convenience of five or ſix perſons, that a ſovereign enſlaves

enſlaves his people and expoſes his throat to the poignard of conſpiracy.

Portugal informs us of the dangers to which, even in this age, kings are expoſed. Arbitrary power, that calamity of nations, does not therefore ſecure either the felicity or life of a monarch. His happineſs is not therefore eſſentially connected with the miſery of his people. Why refrain to tell this truth to princes, and ſuffer them to be ignorant that a limited monarchy is the moſt deſirable of all monarchies (13); that a ſovereign is only great in the greatneſs of his people, ſtrong in their ſtrength, and rich in their wealth: that his intereſt, rightly underſtood, is eſſentially connected with theirs; and, in ſhort, that it is his duty to render them happy?

"By the fortune of war, ſaid an Indian to "Tamerlane, we are thine. Art thou a mer-"chant? Sell us. Art thou a butcher? Kill "us. Art thou a monarch? Make us happy."

Is there a ſovereign who can without horror hear the following celebrated ſpeech of an Arab inceſſantly murmur in his ear? This man, bowed down by the weight of taxes, was unable to maintain himſelf and his family. He layed his complaints before the caliph. The caliph was enraged: the Arab condemned to die. As he went to execution he met an officer eſcorting proviſions. For whom are thoſe proviſions? ſaid the condemned wretched. For the caliph's dogs, replied

plied the officer. *How much better is the condition of a tyrant's dogs*, cried the Arab, *than that of his ſubjects!*

What prince of diſcernment could bear ſuch a reproach; or would, by uſurping an arbitrary power over his ſubjects, condemn himſelf to live among none but ſlaves?

A man in preſence of his tyrant has no opinion and no character. Thomas Kouli Kan ſupped with a favourite. A new ſort of pulſe was ſerved up. There is nothing more pleaſing and wholeſome than this ſort of pulſe, ſaid the monarch. Nothing more pleaſing and wholeſome, ſaid the courtier. After ſupper Kouli Kan found himſelf indiſpoſed, he could not ſleep. When he aroſe, he ſaid, There is nothing more deteſtable and more unwholeſome than that pulſe. Nothing more deteſtable and unwholſome, ſaid the courtier. But you did not think ſo laſt night, ſaid the prince: what has made you change your opinion? My reſpect and my dread, replied the courtier: I can curſe the food with impunity. I am the ſlave of your highneſs and not of the pulſe.

The deſpot is a Gorgon: he petrifies a man even to his thoughts *, and like the Gorgon is a

* What prince, even among the Chriſtians, would, after the example of the caliph Hakkam, permit a magiſtrate to tell him of his injuſtice.

"A poor woman poſſeſſed, at Jehra, a ſmall piece of land "contiguous to the gardens of Hakkam, which that prince "deſired

terror to the world. Is his condition then desirable? Despotism is a yoke equally galling to them that bear it, and him that imposes it. Let the army abandon the tyrant, and the vilest among his slaves becomes his equal, strikes him and says:

Ta force étoit ton droit, ta foiblesse est ton crime.
Thy strength was thy right, thy weakness is thy crime.

But if a prince, through a wrong conception in this matter, place his happiness in the acquire-

" desired to enlarge, and proposed to the woman to give up " her land. She refused, being desirous of preserving the he- " ritage of her forefathers. The intendant of the gardens " took possession of the ground the woman would not sell.

" The woman, bathed in tears, went to implore justice at " Cordova, of which Ibu Bechir was cadi. The text of the " law was plainly in favour of the woman. But what can the " law do with those that think themselves above it? Ibu Be- " chir however did not despair of her cause. He mounted his " ass, and taking with him a sack of an enormous size, pre- " sented himself in that condition before Hakkam, who was " then seated under a pavillion built on the ground of that " woman.

" The arrival of the cadi, and the sack he bore on his " shoulder, astonished the prince. Ibu Bechir prostrated him- " self before Hakkam, and begged permission to fill his sack " with the ground on which he stood. The caliph consented. " The sack filled, the cadi entreated the prince to help him " up with it on his ass. This demand confounded Hakkam. " The sack is too heavy, he said. Prince, replied Ibu Bechir, " with a noble boldness, if you find this sack so heavy which " contains only a part of the land you have unjustly taken from " one of your subjects, how will you, at the day of judgment, " bear the whole land you have unjustly seized. Hakkam, far " from punishing the cadi, generously acknowledged his " fault, and restored the woman her land, with all the buildings " he had constructed on it."

ment

ment of arbitrary power, and a writing, which declares the intention of the prince, inform the people of the miſeries that threaten them, is not this writing ſufficient to excite diſcontent and inſurrections? No: the fatal effects of deſpotiſm have been every where execrated. The Roman hiſtory, the holy Scripture itſelf, deſcribe in a hundred places a moſt horrid picture of tyranny, and yet the reading of theſe has never excited any revolution. It is the actual, multiplied, and durable evils of deſpotiſm, that give a people ſometimes the courage neceſſary to deliver themſelves from the yoke. It is always the cruelty of ſultans that provokes ſedition. All the Eaſtern thrones are ſtained with the blood of their maſters. Who has ſpilt it? Their ſlaves.

The mere publication of the truth occaſions no ſtrong commotion; beſide, the advantage of peace depends on the price at which it is purchaſed. War is doubtleſs an evil; but to avoid it, ſhould men ſuffer their property, their lives, and liberty to be taken from them? An inimical prince comes, with arms in hand, to reduce a people to ſlavery; ſhould this people preſent their necks to the yoke? He that propoſes it is infamous. By whatever name he may call himſelf who would rob me of my liberty, I ought to defend it againſt him

There is no ſtate not ſuſceptible of improvement, often times as neceſſary as diſagreeable to certain perſons. Does adminiſtration forbear to

make

make it? Muſt we, under the hope of a falſe tranquility, ſacrifice to the people in power the public welfare, and under the vain pretence of preſerving the peace, abandon the empire to the robbers who would plunder it?

There are, as I have ſaid, neceſſary evils. No cure is to be had without pain: when we ſuffer in the treatment, it is leſs the effect of the remedy than of the diſeaſe.

A timid conduct, and mean procraſtination, have been often more fatal to communities than ſedition itſelf. We may, without offending a virtuous prince, ſet bounds to his authority; repreſent to him that the law which declares the public welfare the firſt of laws, is ſacred and inviolable, and ought to be reſpected even by him; that all other laws are nothing more than the ſeveral means of ſecuring the execution of that law; and in ſhort, that as he muſt be always unhappy in the unhappineſs of his ſubjects, there is a reciprocal dependence between the felicity of the people and that of the ſovereign. From whence I conclude:

That the object really detrimental to him, is the falſhood which hides from him the diſorder of the ſtate; and the object really advantageous to him, is the truth that informs him of the manner of treating their diſorder.

The revelation of this truth is therefore uſeful: but does a man, they will ſay, owe it to other men, when it is ſo dangerous to reveal it to them?

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

That we owe the truth to the people.

IF on this ſubject I was to conſult St. Auguſtine and St. Ambroſe, I ſhould ſay with the firſt, "Does truth become a ſubject of ſcandal? Let "the ſcandal riſe, and let the truth be ſpoken*".

I ſhould repeat after the ſecond: "He is to "be eſteemed a defender of the truth, who, as "ſoon as he perceives it, ſpeaks it without ſhame "or fear†".

I ſhould laſtly add, "That the truth may be "for a time concealed, but cannot be defeated ‡".

But there is here no want of authority: what we owe to celebrated men is reſpect, and not credulity. We ſhould therefore ſcrupulouſly examine their opinions; and that examination made, we ſhould judge according to our own reaſon, and not according to theirs. I believe the three angles of a triangle to be equal to two right-angles, not becauſe Euclid ſays it, but becauſe I can demonſtrate it to be true.

* Si de veritate ſcandalum, utilius permittitur naſci ſcandalum quam veritas relinquatur.

† Ille veritatis defenſor eſſe debit qui com recte ſentit, loqui non metuit, nec erubeſcit.

‡ Occultari poteſt ad tempus veritas, vinci non poteſt. St. Aug.

If

If we would know whether we really owe the truth to mankind, let us ask the men in place themselves; they will all agree that it is important to them to know it, and that the knowledge of it alone provides them with the means of increasing and securing the public felicity. Now if every man, in quality of a citizen, ought to contribute all in his power to the happiness of his compatriots, whenever he knows the truth he ought to speak it.

To ask if we owe the truth to mankind, is to ask by an obscure and circumlocutory turn of expression, if it be permissible to be virtuous, and to do good to our brethren.

But the obligation to speak the truth supposes the possibility of discovering it: governments therefore ought to facilitate the means, and of all others the most certain is the liberty of the press.

CHAP. XII.

Of the liberty of the press.

IT is to contradiction, and consequently to the liberty of the press, that physics owes its improvements. Had this liberty never subsisted, how many errors, consecrated by time, would be cited as inconteſtible axioms! What is here said of physics is applicable to morality and politics.

If

If we would be ſure of the truth of our opinions, we ſhould make them public. It is by the touch-ſtone of contradiction that we muſt prove them. The preſs therefore ſhould be free. The magiſtrate who prevents it, oppoſes all improvement in morality and politics; he ſins againſt his country *; he choaks the very ſeed of thoſe happy ideas the liberty of the preſs would produce: and who can eſtimate that loſs? Of this we are certain, that a free people, a people who think, will always command the people who do not think †.

A prince therefore owes to his nation the truth, as being uſeful; and the liberty of the preſs, as the means of diſcovering it. Wherever that liberty is with-held, ignorance, like a profound darkneſs, is ſpread over the minds of men. It is then that the lovers of truth, at the ſame time they ſeek it, fear to find it; they are ſenſible that they muſt either conceal it, baſely diſguiſe it, or expoſe themſelves to perſecution; which every man dreads. If it be always the intereſt of the public to know the truth, it is not always the intereſt of a private perſon to ſpeak it.

* He who would ſubmit his ideas to the examination and judgment of his fellow-citizens, ought to publiſh all that he thinks true and uſeful: to conceal them is a ſign of criminal indifference.

† Who forbids the foreigner to ſpeak and write freely? How unjuſt and defective is the government that makes this prohibition? The Engliſh are generally regarded as the beſt, and it is there that the citizen is the moſt free in this reſpect.

Moſt

Moſt governments even exhort the people to a ſearch after the truth; but almoſt all puniſh them for making it public. Now few men will for a long time brave the reſentment of power, from a pure love to mankind and the truth; and conſequently there are few maſters who reveal it to their ſcholars. So that the learning now taught in the colleges and ſeminaries is reduced to the reading of ſome legends, and to the knowledge of ſome ſophiſms proper to encourage ſuperſtition, to render the mind falſe and the heart inhuman. Men ſhould have another education; it is time that theſe trifles give place to ſolid inſtruction; that men be taught what they owe to themſelves, to their neighbours, and to their country; that they be made to ſee the ridicule of religious diſputes *; the intereſt they have in improving their morals, and conſequently in ſecuring the liberty of thinking and writing.

But what whimſical opinions will not ſuch a liberty produce? No matter. Theſe opinions being deſtroyed by reaſon as ſoon as produced by caprice, will make no alterations in the tranquility of a ſtate. There are no ſpecious pretences with

* For what reaſon ſhould a free inquiry about religion be forbid? If it be true, it will ſtand the teſt of examination: if it be falſe, how abſurd is it to protect a religion whoſe morality is puſilanimous and cruel, and whoſe worſhip is a charge to the ſtate by an exceſſive expence in maintaining its miniſters?

which hypocriſy and tyranny have not coloured their deſire of impoſing ſilence on men of diſcernment; and there is no virtuous citizen can ſee in theſe vain pretences any legitimate reaſon for remaining ſilent.

This publication of the truth can be diſpleaſing to thoſe impoſtors only, who too frequently gaining the attention of princes, repreſent an enlightened people as factious, and a brutal people as docile. But what does experience teach us concerning this matter? That every intelligent people are deaf to the idle declamations of fanaticiſm, and ſhocked by all acts of injuſtice.

When a man is deprived of his property and liberty, and threatened with the loſs of life itſelf, he becomes exaſperated; it is then the ſlave arms againſt his maſter. Truth has no enemies but the enemies of the public: bad men alone oppoſe its promulgation.

To conclude, it is no great matter to ſhew that truth is uſeful; that man owes it to man; and that the preſs ought to be free: we ſhould alſo point out the evils produced in empires by an indifference for the truth.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the evils produced by an indifference for the truth.

IN the political, as in the human body, a certain degree of fermentation is neceſſary to ſupport motion and life. An indifference for glory and the truth produces a ſtagnation in the ſoul and the mind. Every nation that by the form of its government, or the ſtupidity of its miniſters, comes to this ſtate of indifference is barren in great talents, as well as in great virtues *. Let us take the Indians for an example: what men are theſe, when compared to the active and induſtrious inhabitants of the Seine, the Rhine, or the Thames!

The Indian, plunged in ignorance, indifferent to truth, wretched at home, and feeble abroad, is the ſlave of a deſpot, equally incapable of leading him to happineſs in peace, or to an enemy in war †. What difference between the modern In-

* The virtues fly the country from which truth is baniſhed; they will not inhabit the land where the title of the Sun of Juſtice is given to the moſt unjuſt and moſt cruel tyrants, and where their panegyrics are pronounced by terror. What ideas can wretched courtiers form of virtue in countries where princes the moſt feared are moſt praiſed.

† When there is a war in the Eaſt, the ſophy, retiring to his ſeraglio, commands his ſlaves to go and be killed for him on the frontiers: he will not even deign to conduct them. Can it be, ſays Machiavel, that a monarch ſhall abandon to his favourites,

dia and that formerly ſo renowned, and which, cited as the nurſery of the arts and ſciences, was peopled with men greedy of glory and of diſcoveries? The contempt in which this nation is held ſhews the contempt that every people are to expect, who like them lie plunged in indolence and an indifference for glory.

Whoever regards ignorance as favourable to government, and error as uſeful, miſtakes their productions: he has not conſulted hiſtory; he does not know that an error, uſeful for the preſent, too frequently contains the ſeeds of the greateſt calamities.

A white cloud aſcends above the mountains; it is the experienced mariner alone who beholds it as the forerunner of a hurricane, and haſtes to a place of ſhelter: he knows that, deſcending from the ſummit of the mountain, the cloud will extend itſelf over the plain, and ſoon veil the ſky, yet bright and ſerene, with a frightful night of tempeſts.

Error is the white cloud in which few men ſee the evils it portends. Theſe evils, hid from the

the moſt noble of his functions, that of commanding his armies? Can he be ignorant that others being intereſted in prolonging their command, will for that reaſon prolong the war? But what a loſs of men and money is occaſioned by this prolongation; and to what a reverſe is a victorious nation expoſed, that neglects the opportunity of totally cruſhing an enemy.

fool,

fool, are perceived by the wife: he knows that a ſingle error is ſufficient to degrade a people, and obſcure the whole horizon of their ideas; and yet an erroneous conception of the Divinity has frequently produced this effect.

Error, dangerous in itſelf, is ſtill more ſo by propagation: one produces many. Every man compares, more or leſs, his ideas together. If he adopt a falſe idea, that, united with others, produces ſuch as are neceſſarily falſe, which combining again with all thoſe his memory contains, give to all of them a greater or leſs tinge of falſhood. Theologic errors are a proof of this: one of them is alone ſufficient to infect the whole maſs of a man's ideas, and produce an infinity of capricious, monſtrous, and always unexpected ideas; for the birth of monſters can never be predicted before their delivery.

Errors are of a thouſand kinds. Truth, on the contrary, is uniform and ſimple; its progreſs is always ſimilar and conſequent. A diſcerning mind previouſly diſcovers the route it ought to take *: it is not ſo with error. Always inconſequent and irregular in its courſe, we loſe ſight of

* The principles of a judicious miniſter being known, we may, in almoſt all circumſtances, predict his conduct. That of a fool is not to be divined. It is by a viſit, a word, a fit of impatience, he is determined, and from hence the proverb, *that God only knows what a fool will do.*

it every inſtant; its appearances are always unforeſeen, and therefore we cannot predict its effects. To ſtifle the ſeeds * of error, the legiſlature cannot too much excite men to the ſearch after truth.

Every vice, ſay the philoſophers, is an error of the underſtanding. Crimes and prejudices are brothers; truth and virtue are ſiſters. But who are the parents of truth? Contradiction and diſpute. Liberty of thought bears the fruit of truth; this liberty elevates the ſoul, and engenders ſublime thoughts; fear, on the contrary, debaſes the ſoul, ſo that it can produce none but mean ideas.

However uſeful truth may be, a people being led to their ruin by the imperfection of their government, cannot avoid it but by a great change in their government, laws, manners, and cuſtoms, ſhould the legiſlature attempt it? Should it make the preſent generation miſerable to merit the eſteem of poſterity? Should that truth be heard which would adviſe men to ſecure the felicity of future generations by the misfortune of the preſent?

* Should we, to deſtroy error, compel it to ſilence? No: how then? Let it talk on. Error, obſcure of itſelf, is rejected by every ſound underſtanding. If time has not given it credit, and it be not favoured by government, it cannot bear the aſpect of examination. Reaſon will ultimately direct wherever it be freely exerciſed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

That the happineſs of future generations is never connected with the miſery of the preſent generation.

TO ſhew the abſurdity of ſuch ſuppoſition, let us ſee of what the preſent generation, as it is called, is compoſed.

1. Of a great number of children who have not yet contracted habits.

2. Of youths who can eaſily change their habits.

3. Of finiſhed men, many of whom have already foreſeen and approved the reformation propoſed.

4. Of old men, to whom every change of opinion and habit is really inſupportable.

What reſults from this enumeration? That a wiſe reformation in manners, laws, and government may diſpleaſe old men, thoſe that are weak and ſlaves to cuſtoms, but that it will be uſeful to future generations, and alſo to the greateſt number of thoſe that compoſe the preſent generation, and conſequently can never be contrary to the preſent and general ſtate of a nation.

Beſide, every one knows that the perpetuity of abuſes in an empire is not the effect of our compaſſion for old men, but the ill-judged intereſt of

people in power; theſe, equally indifferent to the happineſs of the preſent * and future generations, would have all ſacrificed to their moſt trifling caprice. They would have it ſo, and are obeyed.

How exalted ſoever the ſtation of a man may be, it is to the nation and not to him the firſt regard is due. God, they ſay, died for the ſalvation of all men: we ſhould not therefore ſacrifice the happineſs of all to the caprice of one. All perſonal intereſt ſhould be ſacrificed to that of the community. But it will be ſaid, theſe ſacrifices are ſometimes cruel; yes, when they are executed by the ſtupid and inhuman. When the public welfare requires the misfortune of an individual, every compaſſion is due to his miſery; there are no means to alleviate it that ſhould not be employed; it is then that the juſtice and humanity of a prince ſhould be exerted: all the unfortunate have a right to his beneficence; he ſhould commiſerate their ſufferings. Miſerable is the ſtate of the inſenſible and cruel man who refuſes the citizen even the conſolation of complaining. Lamentation, common to all that ſuffer, all that breathe, is always lawful.

* A wiſe government always provides in the happineſs of the preſent generation for that of future generations. It has been ſaid of youth and age, that the one foreſees too much, and the other too little: that to-day is the miſtreſs of the young man, and to-morrow that of the old one. It is after the manner of old men ſtates ſhould conduct themſelves.

I would

I would not have the lamentations of the unfortunate ſtop the progreſs of the prince in his purſuit of the public good; but I would have him in his progreſs dry up the tears of miſery, and that, prone to pity, the love of his country alone ſhould prevent him from conſulting the happineſs of individuals.

Such a prince, always the friend of the diſtreſſed, and always employed in promoting the happineſs of his ſubjects, will never regard the publication of the truth as dangerous.

What is to be concluded from the foregoing obſervations on this queſtion?

That the diſcovery of the truth, always uſeful to the public, is never pernicious to any but its author.

That the publication of the truth does not affect the peace of ſtates; that the ſlowneſs of its progreſs alone is a ſecurity againſt any ſuch conſequence.

That under every form of government it is important to know the truth.

That there are properly but two ſorts of governments, the one good, and the other bad.

That in neither of them the happineſs of the prince is connected with the miſery of his ſubjects.

That if truth be uſeful we owe it to mankind.

That conſequently all governments ought to facilitate the means of diſcovering the truth.

That

That the moſt ſure of all others is the liberty of the preſs.

That the ſciences owe their improvements to that liberty.

That an indifference for the truth is a ſource of error, and error a ſource of public calamities.

That no friend to the truth will propoſe the ſacrificing the felicity of the preſent generation to that of the future generation.

That ſuch an hypotheſis is impoſſible.

Laſtly, that it is from the ſole publication of the truth we are to expect the future happineſs of mankind.

The conſequence of theſe ſeveral propoſitions is, that no one having a right to promote the misfortune of the ſtate, no one has a right to oppoſe the publication of the truth, and eſpecially of the firſt principles of morality.

If a man by means of force uſurps the power of a nation, from that moment the nation is plunged in an ignorance of its true intereſts; the only laws adopted are thoſe that favour avarice, and the tyranny of the men in power; the public cauſe remains without protectors. Such is in moſt kingdoms the actual ſtate of the people. This ſtate is the more dreadful as it requires ages to free men from it.

That beſide, thoſe intereſted in the miſeries of a people fear no approaching revolution. Error is not to be ſubdued by the attack of truth, but by

by the ſtroke of power. The time of its deſtruction will be that when the prince unites his intereſt with that of the public; till that time it is in vain to preſent the truth to mankind; it will be always miſunderſtood. If we are guided in our conduct and belief by nothing but the intereſt of the preſent moment, how ſhall we diſtinguiſh, by its uncertain and variable glimmer, truth from falſhood?

CHAP. XV.

That the ſame opinions appear true or falſe, according to the intereſt we have to believe them the one or the other.

ALL men agree in the truth of geometric propoſitions; is it becauſe they are demonſtrated? No: but becauſe men have no intereſt in taking the falſe for the true. If they had ſuch intereſt, the propoſitions moſt evidently demonſtrated would appear to them problematic; they would prove, on occaſion, that the contained is greater than the container: this is a fact of which ſome religions afford examples.

If a Catholic divine propoſe to prove that there are ſticks that have not two ends, nothing is to him more facile; he will firſt diſtinguiſh ſticks into two ſorts, the one material, the other ſpiritual. He will then deliver an obſcure diſſertation on the nature of ſpiritual ſticks, and conclude that the exiſtence

exiſtence of theſe ſticks is a myſtery above, yet not contrary to reaſon : and then this ſelf-evident propoſition *, " that there is no ſtick without two " ends," becomes problematic.

It is the ſame, ſays an Engliſh author on this ſubject, with the moſt obvious truths of morality ; the moſt evident is, " that with regard to crimes, " the puniſhment ſhould be perſonal, and that I " ought not to be puniſhed for a robbery com- " mitted by my neighbour."

Yet how many theologians are there who ſtill maintain that God puniſhes in the pre-

* Every one talks of evidence ; and as this opportunity preſents, I ſhall endeavour to annex a determinate idea to the word.

Evidence comes from the Latin word *videre, to ſee.* I ſee that an ell is longer than a foot. Every fact therefore that I can aſcertain by my ſenſes is to me evident. But is it ſo to thoſe that cannot aſcertain it by the ſame means ? No : from hence I conclude, that a propoſition generally evident is nothing more than a fact, of which all men can equally and at every inſtant verify the exiſtence.

That two bodies and two bodies make four bodies, is a propoſition evident to all men ; becauſe all can at every inſtant aſcertain the truth of it : but that there is in the ſtables of the king of Siam an elephant eight yards high, is evident to all thoſe who have ſeen it, but not to me, nor to thoſe who have not meaſured it. This propoſition therefore cannot be cited either as evident, or as probable. It is in reality more reaſonable to ſuppoſe that ten witneſſes of this fact were either deceived, or that they exaggerate, or laſtly, that they falſified, than it is to believe that there ſhould be an elephant of twice the common height.

ſent

ſent race of mankind the ſins of their firſt parent *.

To conceal the abſurdity of this reaſoning they add, that the juſtice of Heaven is not that of the earth: but if the juſtice of Heaven be true (14), and be not that of the earth, man then lives in ignorance of what juſtice is; he therefore can never know if the action he thinks equitable be not unjuſt, and if robbery and murder are not virtues (15). What then become of the principles of the natural law of morality? How can we be ſure of their equity, and diſtinguiſh an honeſt man from a villain?

CHAP. XVI.

That intereſt makes us eſteem in ourſelves even that cruelty we deteſt in others.

ALL the nations of Europe regard with horror thoſe prieſts of Carthage, whoſe barbarity encloſed living children in the burning ſtatue of Saturn or Moloch. There is no Spaniard however who does not reſpect the ſame cruelty in himſelf and

* Why, ſaid a miſſionary to a learned Chineſe, do you admit nothing but a blind deſtiny? Becauſe, he replied, we cannot think that an intelligent Being can be unjuſt, and puniſh in one juſt come into the world a crime committed 6000 years ſince by his father Adam. Your ſtupid piety makes God to be an intelligent and unjuſt Being: ours, in fact more enlightened, makes him a blind deſtiny.

his

his inquiſitors. To what muſt we attribute this contradiction? To the veneration a Spaniard has for a monk from his infancy. To diveſt himſelf of this habitual veneration, he muſt conſult his reaſon, expoſe himſelf at once to the fatigue of attention, and the hatred of thoſe monks. The Spaniard is therefore compelled, by the combined intereſt of fear and idleneſs, to revere in the Dominican the barbarity he deteſts in the Mexican prieſt. I ſhall doubtleſs be told, that the difference of religions changes the eſſence of things, and that an enormous cruelty in one religion is a reſpectable action in another.

I ſhall not reply to this abſurdity; but only obſerve, that the ſame intereſt which, for example, makes me love and reſpect in one country, the cruelty I hate and deſpiſe in others, ought alſo to faſcinate the eyes of my reaſon in other reſpects, and frequently exaggerate the contempt due to certain vices.

Avarice is an example of this. When a miſer contents himſelf with giving nothing, and ſaving what he has got, and is in other reſpects guilty of no injuſtice, he is perhaps of all bad men the leaſt injurious to ſociety; the evil he does is properly nothing more than an omiſſion of the good he might do. If of all the vices avarice be the moſt generally deteſted, it is the effect of an avidity common to almoſt all men, it is becauſe men hate

hate thoſe from whom they can expect nothing. The greedy miſers rail at ſordid miſers.

CHAP. XVI.

Intereſt makes crimes to be honoured.

WHATEVER imperfect notions men may have of virtue, there are few who reſpect robbery, murder, the poiſoner, or the parricide; and yet the whole church conſtantly honours theſe crimes in its protectors. I ſhall cite for examples Conſtantine and Clovis.

The former, without regard to the ſanctity of oaths, cauſed his brother-in-law Licinius to be aſſaſſinated; maſſacred his nephew Licinius at the age of twelve years; put to death his ſon Criſpus, who was illuſtrious for his virtues; cut the throat of his father-in-law Maximian at Marſeilles, and ſuffocated his wife Fauſta in a bath. The authenticity of theſe crimes forced the Pagans to exclude this emperor from their feaſts and initiations; and the virtuous Chriſtians received him into their church. As to the ferocious Clovis, he beat out the brains of the two brothers Regnacaire and Richemer, and who were both his relations. But he was liberal to the church, and Savaron proves the ſanctity of Clovis. The church, it is true, has not ſaintified either Clovis

of

or Conſtantine, but it has in them, at leaſt honoured two men fouled by the moſt enormous crimes.

Whatever extends the dominion of the church always appears innocent in its eyes: Pepin is a proof. The pope at his deſire paſſed from Italy to France; on his arrival he anointed Pepin, and crowned in him an uſurper who kept his lawful king ſhut up in the convent of St. Martin, and the ſon of his maſter in the convent of Fontenelle in Normandy. But this coronation, they will ſay, was the crime of the pope, and not that of the church. The ſilence of the prelates was a ſecret approbation of the pope's conduct. Without this tacit conſent the pope, in an aſſembly of the principal perſons of the nation, would not have dared to legitimate the uſurpation of Pepin; he would not have forbid them, under pain of excommunication, to chuſe a king of another race.

But did all the prelates really honour ſuch princes as Pepin, Clovis, and Conſtantine? Some among them doubtleſs bluſhed inwardly at thoſe odious beatifications; but moſt of them ſaw no crime in the criminal that enriched them. What cannot the faſcination of intereſt operate on mankind?

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Intereſt makes ſaints.

I SHALL take Charlemagne for an example. He was a great man; endowed with great virtues; but with none of thoſe that make ſaints. His hands were loathſome with the blood of the Saxons, whom he unjuſtly butchered; he robbed his nephews of their patrimony; he married four wives, and was accuſed of inceſt; his conduct was not that of a ſaint, but he increaſed the territory of the church, and the church made him a ſaint. It did the ſame by Hermenigildus, ſon of the Viſigoth, king Eurigildus. This young prince leagued with a prince of Suevia againſt his father, gave him battle, loſt it near Cordova, and was killed by an officer of Eurigildus; but as he believed in the conſubſtantiality, the church ſanctified him. A thouſand villains have had the ſame fortune. St. Grill, biſhop of Alexandria, aſſaſſinated the beautiful and ſublime Hypathia, and was in like manner canoniſed.

Philip de Commines relates on this ſubject, that on entering the convent of the Carmelites, at Pavia, he was ſhewn the body of count Yvertu; that count who obtained the principality of Milan by the murder of his uncle Bernabo, and was the firſt that bore the title of duke. What!

ſaid Commines to the monk who attended him, have you canoniſed ſuch a monſter! He was our benefactor, replied the Carmelite; and, to increaſe their number, it is our cuſtom to grant them the honours of ſanctity: it is by us that fools and knaves become ſaints, and by them that we become rich.

How many ſucceſſions have been violated by the monks! But they rob for the church, and the church makes them ſaints. The hiſtory of papiſm is nothing more than a vaſt collection of ſimilar facts. When we open the legends we read the names of a thouſand canoniſed ſcoundrels; but we ſearch in vain for the name of Alfred the Great, who for a long time was the happineſs of England; or that of Henry IV. who would have been that of France; and for the names of thoſe men of genius, who, by their diſcoveries in the arts and ſciences, have been an honour to their age and their country.

The church, always greedy of riches, conſtantly diſpoſes of the dignities in heaven in favour of thoſe who give it great riches upon earth. Intereſt peoples the celeſtial regions. What bounds can be ſet to its power? If God, as they ſay, has made all things for himſelf, *omnia propter ſemetipſum operatus eſt Dominus*, man, created after his image and reſemblance, has done the ſame. It is always according to his own intereſt that he

judges *. Is he often unhappy? It is becauſe he wants diſcernment. Idleneſs, a momentary advantage, and eſpecially a ſhameful ſubmiſſion to received opinions, are ſo many rocks ſcattered in the courſe of our purſuit after happineſs.

To avoid them we muſt think; and we will not take the trouble: men like better to believe than to examine. How often has our credulity blinded us in the purſuit of our true intereſt! Man has been defined a rational animal; I define

*. Our belief, according to ſome philoſophers, is independent of our intereſt; theſe philoſophers are right or wrong according to the idea they attached to the word *belief*; if they mean by it a clear idea of the matter believed, and that they can, like the geometricians, demonſtrate the truth of it, it is certain that no error is believed, that none will ſtand the examen, that we form no clear idea of it, and that in this ſenſe there are few believers. But if we take the word in the common acceptation, and mean by a believer an adorer of the bull Apis; if the man who, without having a clear idea of what he believes, believes by imitation, who, ſo to ſay, believes he believes, and maintains the truth of his belief at the peril of his life; in this ſenſe there are many believers. The Catholic church boaſts continually of its martyrs; but I know not wherefore. Every religion has its own. "He that pretends to a revelation "ought to die in the maintenance of what he ſays: that is "the only proof he can give of what he aſſerts." It is not ſo with the philoſopher; his propoſitions muſt be ſupported by facts and reaſonings; whether he die or not in the maintenance of his doctrine is of little importance; his death would prove only that he was obſtinately attached to his opinon; not that it was true.

As for the reſt, the belief of fanatics, always founded on an imaginary, but powerful intereſt in heavenly rewards, conſtantly impoſes on the vulgar; and it is to theſe fanatics that we muſt atribute the eſtabliſhment of almoſt all general opinions.

him credulous animal*: what can he not be made to believe? When a hypocrite pretends to virtue, he is reputed virtuous, and is in consequence more honoured than an honeſt man.

Do the clergy pretend to be without ambition? They are regarded as ſuch, even at the time they declare themſelves to be the firſt body of the ſtate †.

Do the biſhops and cardinals pretend to humility? They are believed on their word; when by aſſuming the title of lordſhip, eminence, and excellence, the latter would even put themſelves on a level with kings. *Cardinales regibus æquiparantur.*

The monk calls himſelf poor, and is reputed ſo, even at the time he poſſeſſes the greateſt part of the revenue of a ſtate; and this monk in conſequence receives alms from an infinity of dupes.

To conclude, let no one be aſtoniſhed at human imbecility: men, being in general badly educated, are what they ought to be; their extreme credulity rarely leaving them the free exerciſe of their reaſon, they in conſequence form wrong

* The manners and actions of animals prove that they compare and judge. They are in this reſpect more or leſs rational, have more or leſs reſemblance to man; but what compariſon is there between their credulity and ours? None. It is principally in the extent of credulity we differ; and it is this perhaps which moſt particularly diſtinguiſhes man from animals.

† If the apoſtles never aſſumed the rank of the firſt body of the ſtates, if they never pretended to equal themſelves to the Cæſars and proconſuls, the clergy muſt have a very high opinion of human ſtupidity to call themſelves humble, and at the ſame time make ſuch faſtuous pretenſions.

judg-

judgments and are unhappy. What is to be done where men are indifferent to the matter on which they are to judge *, and consequently without attention and discernment to judge properly; or where they have strong prejudices concerning that matter, and consequently it is the interest of the present moment that almost always directs their judgment?

A just judgment supposes an indifference for the matter judged of †, and an earnest desire to judge rightly. Now in the present state of so-

* When an opinion appears to me indifferent, it is by the balance of my reason I weigh its advantages. But if that opinion excite in me hatred, love or fear, it is not my reason, but my passions, that judge of its truth or falsity. Now the more vigorous my passions are, the less share will reason have in my judgments. To overcome the most gross prejudice, it is not enough to see its absurdity.

Have I demonstrated in the morning the non-existence of apparitions? If I am at night alone in a chamber or a wood, and phantoms or apparitions seem to rise out of the floor or the earth, terror seizes me: the most solid reasoning cannot dissipate my fear. To stifle in me the fear of spectres, it is not sufficient to prove their non-existence; I must have the reasons by which that prejudice is destroyed as habitually present with me, as constantly in my memory, as the prejudice itself. Now this is a work of time, and in some cases of a very long time; till this time I shall tremble in the dark at the very name of a spectre and magician. This is a fact proved by experience.

† Why is a foreigner a better judge of the beauties of a new work than one of the same nation? Because indifference dictates the judgment of the former, and the other is directed by envy and prejudice, at least in the first moments. It is not that among the latter there are not who take a pride in forming a sound judgment; but their number is too small to give their judgment at first any weight with the public.

cieties few men are endowed with these two qualities of indifference and desire, or find themselves in the happy situation that produces them.

Too servily attached to the interests of the present moment, we almost always sacrifice to it our future interests, and judge even against evidence itself. Perhaps M. de la Riviere has expected too much from this evidence; it is on its power he has founded the future happiness of nations, and this foundation is not so solid as he imagines.

CHAP. XIX.

Interest persuades the great that they are of a different species from other men.

IF we admit that there was a first man, we must all be of the same house, of a family equally ancient, and consequently all noble *.

Why refuse the title of gentleman to him who by extracts taken from the registers of circumcisions and baptisms could prove a descendence in a direct line from Abraham to himself? It is therefore nothing more than the preservation or

* *Nobles and heralds, by your leave,*
Here lie the bones of Matthew Prior,
The son of Adam and of Eve,
Let Bourbon or Nassau go higher.

PRIOR.

the

the loſs of extracts that diſtinguiſhes the nobleman from the plebeian.

But do the great really think themſelves of a race ſuperior to the mechanic, and the ſovereign of a different ſpecies from a duke, count, &c.? Why not? I have ſeen men, not more ſorcerers than myſelf, think and call themſelves ſorcerers, even on the ſcaffold. A thouſand inſtances prove this fact. There are who think themſelves born happy; and when fortune abandons them a moment, are indigent. This opinion, ſays Mr. Hume, is in them the effect of the conſtant ſucceſs of their firſt enterprizes; after this ſucceſs they take their happineſs for an effect, and their ſtar for the cauſe of that effect *. If ſuch be human nature, can we wonder that the great, debauched by the daily homage rendered to their riches and dignities, think themſelves of a peculiar race †.

Yet they acknowledge Adam to be the common father of all men; yes, but without being fully convinced of it: their actions, diſcourſes, and looks, all give the lye to this acknowledgement; and they are all perſuaded that they and the monarch have the ſame prerogative over the common people that the farmer has over his cattle.

* When two facts, ſays Mr. Hume, happen alway together, there is ſuppoſed to be a neceſſary dependence between them. One of them is called the cauſe, and the other the effect.

† The antiquity of their houſe is in a peculiar manner dear to them who cannot attain the merit of their anceſtors.

I do not mean here to ſatirize the great *, but mankind in general. The tradeſman has the ſame contempt for his porter, that the nobleman has for him.

To conclude, let no one be ſurpriſed to find man ſubject to ſo much illuſion †: it would be more ſurpriſing to find him reſiſt ſuch errors as flatter his vanity.

He believes, and ever will believe, what he has an intereſt in believing: if he ſometimes employ himſelf in a ſearch after truth, it is becauſe he ſometimes imagines it to be his intereſt to find it.

CHAP. XX.

Intereſt makes men honour vice in their protector.

WHEN a man depends for his fortune and conſideration on a perſon in power without merit, he becomes that perſon's panegyriſt. The firſt of thoſe men, hitherto honeſt, remains ſo

* If all men are the deſcendants of Adam, does it follow that they ſhould be equally reſpected? No: there are in every ſociety ſuperiors that ought to have pre-eminence. But is it to great places or high birth our reſpect is due? I conclude for great places. They ſuppoſe at leaſt ſome merit; and what the public has a real intereſt in honouring, is merit.

† When prejudice commands, reaſon is ſilent. Prejudice makes men, in certain countries, reſpect the officer of quality, and deſpiſe the officer of fortune; conſequently prefer birth to merit. There is no doubt but a ſtate come to that degree of corruption is near its ruin.

no

no longer; he changes his manners, and, ſo to ſay, his being: he deſcends from the condition of a free citizen to that of a ſlave: his intereſt inſtantly becomes ſeperate from that of the public. Solely occupied with the fortune of his protector, he thinks every method to increaſe it legitimate. Does his protector commit injuſtice, and oppreſs his fellow-citizens, and do they complain? They are to blame. Did not the prieſts of Jupiter make men adore in him the parricide by which they lived?

What does the protected require in the protector? Power, and not merit. What in his turn does the protector require from the protected? Servility, devotion, and not virtue. It is by virtue of his devotion that the protected is raiſed to the firſt employments. If there have been inſtances where merit alone has raiſed a man, it has been in tempeſtuous times, when neceſſity has made him uſeful.

If in a civil war all important employments are given to men of talents, it is becauſe the powerful of each party being ſtrongly intereſted in the deſtruction of their adverſaries, are forced to ſacrifice their envy and other paſſions to their ſecurity. This intereſt makes them then ſee the merit of thoſe they employ. But the danger paſſed, and peace reſtored, the men of power become indifferent to vice or virtue, talents or ſtupidity: merit

merit is then degraded, and truth deſpiſed; for what can it then do for mankind?

CHAP. XXI.

That the intereſt of the powerful commands, in general opinions, more imperiouſly than the truth.

MEN continually boaſt of the power of the truth, and yet this power, ſo vaunted, is fruitleſs, if the intereſt of the prince do not make it prolific. How many truths are there buried in ſuch works as thoſe of Gordon, Sydney, and Machiavel, and that will not be recovered but by the efficacious efforts of a diſcerning and virtuous monarch. Such a prince, they ſay, will ariſe ſooner or later. Be it ſo. Till that period thoſe truths may be regarded as materials ready prepared for a building. It is certain that thoſe materials will not be employed by a potentate but in ſuch poſitions and circumſtances as make it the intereſt of his glory to uſe them.

Opinion, they ſay, is the queen of the world. There are certainly periods at which the general opinion commands over ſovereigns themſelves: but what has this fact in common with the power of the truth? Does it ſhew that the general opinion is produced by it? No: experience proves on the contrary that almoſt all queſtions in morality and politics

politics are reſolved by the ſtrong and not by the rational; and that if opinion rules the world, it is at laſt the powerful that rule opinion.

Whoever diſpenſes honours, riches, and puniſhments, attaches to himſelf a great number of citizens. Theſe diſtributions debaſe their minds, and give him the command over them. Such are the means by which the ſultans legitimate their moſt abſurd pretenſions, accuſtom their ſubjects to honour the title of ſlaves, and deſpiſe that of free men.

What opinions are the moſt generally diffuſed? Without doubt religious opinions. Now it is not reaſon, nor truth, but violence, by which thoſe are eſtabliſhed (16). Mahomet would propagate his Koran; he armed, he flattered, he terrified the imagination. The people were by fear and hope influenced to receive his law; and the viſions of the prophet ſoon became the opinion of half the univerſe.

But is not the progreſs of truth more rapid than that of error? Yes, when they are equally propagated by the powerful. Truth of itſelf is clear; every ſound underſtanding can perceive it. Error, on the contrary, is always obſcure, always wrapt up in the cloud of incomprehenſibility, and there becomes the contempt of good ſenſe. But what can good ſenſe do againſt force? It is force, fraud, and chance, more than reaſon and truth, that have always preſided at the formation of general opinions.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

A ſecret intereſt always concealed from the parliaments the conformity of the morality of the Jeſuits with papiſm.

THE parliaments have at the ſame time condemned the morality of the Jeſuits and reſpected that of papiſm *. The conformity of thoſe two moralities is however evident. The protection granted the Jeſuits by the pope, and the greateſt part of the Catholic biſhops (17), renders this conformity ſtriking. We know that the papiſtical church always approved, in the works of thoſe religious, maxims that are as favourable to Rome as they are unfavourable to thoſe of every other government; yet the clergy in this reſpect were their accomplices. The morality of the Jeſuits is however alone condemned. The parliaments are ſilent with regard to that of the church. Why? Becauſe they fear to contend with a criminal too ſtrong for them.

They have a confuſed perception that their influence is not equal to that enterprize; that it was ſcarce able to counterpoiſe the weight of the Jeſuits. Their intereſt therefore adviſes them not to

* The natural pox, ſaid a great politician, has made vaſt ravages among the European nations; but the moral pox (papiſm) has made ſtill a greater.

attempt

attempt more, and directs them to honour in the guilty the crime they cannot punish.

CHAP. XXIII.

Interest makes men daily contradict this maxim; Do not to others what thou wouldst not they should do unto thee.

THE Catholic priest, persecuted by the Calvinist or the Mussulman, denounces persecution to be an infraction of the law of nature; but when this priest becomes a persecutor, persecution appears to him legitimate: it is in him the effect of a holy zeal, and a love for his neighbour. Thus the same action becomes either just or unjust according as the priest is executioner or malefactor.

If we read the history of the different sects among the Christians, we find that as long as they were weak they employed no other arms in their theological disputes than those of argument (18) and entreaty. But when those sects became strong, of persecuted, as I have already said, they became persecutors. Calvin burned Servetus. The Jesuit pursues the Jansenist, and the Jansenist would burn the Deist. Into what a labyrinth of errors and contradictions does interest lead us! It obscures in us even self-evident truths.

What

What in fact does the theatre of this world present us? Nothing but the various and perpetual play of interest (19). The more we meditate on this principle, the more we perceive its extent and fecundity. It is an inexhaustible mine of subtle and powerful ideas.

CHAP. XXIV.

That interest conceals from the knowledge of the priest himself, who is an honest man, the evils produced by papism.

COUNTRIES the most religious are the most uncultivated. It is in the ecclesiastic dominions the greatest depopulation appears: for those countries are of all others the worst governed. In the Catholic cantons of Switzerland want and stupidity reign; in the Protestant cantons, plenty and industry: papism therefore is destructive to empires. It is above all fatal to those nations who, powerful by their commerce, have an interest in improving their colonies *, encouraging industry, and advancing the arts.

But among the several nations what is it renders the papal idol so respectable? Custom. What is

* Rising colonies become populous by toleration, and for that reason the Christian religion should be called back to those principles on which it was founded by Jesus.

it

it among the ſame nations that forbids men to think? Idleneſs; which reigns over men of every condition.

It is from idleneſs that princes ſee all things with the eyes of others; and from idleneſs that, in certain caſes, nations and miniſters charge the pope with thinking for them. What follows? That the pontiff profits by that privilege to extend and confirm his authority, which princes might limit were they firmly reſolved to do it. Without ſuch reſolution it is not to be imagined that an intolerant church will break the chains with which ſhe fetters the people.

Intolerance is a mine under the throne that is always charged, and which eccleſiaſtical diſcontent is always ready to ſet on fire. What can counteract this mine? Philoſophy and virtue: for which reaſon the church conſtantly decrys the informations of one, and the humanity of the other; and always draws philoſophy and virtue in hideous characters *. The object of the clergy has been to diſcredit them, and their means have been by calumny. Men in general like better to believe

* If the hatred that exhales in vague accuſations proves the innocence of the accuſed, nothing does philoſophy more honour than the ſacerdotal hatred. The clergy have never cited facts againſt them; they did not accuſe the philoſophers of the aſſaſſination of Henry IV. of the ſedition of Madrid, nor of the conſpiracy of St. Domingo. It was a monk, and not a philoſopher, who the laſt year there encouraged the blacks to maſſacre the whites.

than

than examine; and the clergy in conſequence always find in the averſion of men for thinking the firmeſt ſupport of the papal power. What other cauſe could faſcinate the eyes of the French magiſtrates on the danger of papiſm? If in the affair of the Jeſuits they ſhewed the moſt anxious tenderneſs for their prince, if they then foreſaw the exceſs to which fanaticiſm might run, they did not however ſee, that of all religions papiſm is the moſt proper to light it up.

The love of the magiſtrates for the prince is not to be doubted; but it is to be doubted whether that love in them be well informed. Their eyes have been a long time ſhut againſt the light; if they ſhould one day open them, they will ſee that it is toleration alone which can ſecure the life of the monarchs who protect them. They have ſeen fanaticiſm attack a prince who every day gives proofs of his humanity by the numerous acts of goodneſs he beſtows on thoſe that approach him.

I am a ſtranger, and know not this prince; he is, they ſay, beloved. Such however is the effect of ſuperſtition in the heart of a devout Frenchman, that his love for a monk is ſtill ſuperior to that for his king.

Can we not, on ſo important a ſubject, awaken the attention of the magiſtrates, and make them ſee the dangers to which the intolerance of papiſm will always expoſe a ſovereign.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Every intolerant religion is eſſentially regicidal.

ALMOST every religion is intolerant, and in every religion of this kind intolerance furniſhes a pretext for perſecution and murder; even the throne itſelf affords no ſhelter againſt ſacerdotal cruelty. Intolerance admitted, the prieſt can equally purſue the enemy of God on the throne * and in the cottage.

Intolerance is the mother of regicide. It was on its intolerance the church founded the edifice of its grandeur; all its members concur in its conſtruction; all of them think they ſhall be ſo

* If we believe the Jeſuit Santarel, the pope has a right to puniſh kings. (So that in a treatiſe on hereſy, ſchiſm, apoſtacy, and the papal power, printed at Rome, with the permiſſion of the ſuperiors, by the executor, Barteline Lanory, in 1626), that Jeſuit ſays,—If the pope have over princes a directive power, he has alſo a corrective power. The ſovereign pontiff can therefore puniſh heretical princes by temporal pains: he cannot only excommunicate them, but alſo ſtrip them of their kingdoms, and abſolve their ſubjects from their oath of fidelity. He can appoint directors to princes incapable of governing; and this he may do without any council, becauſe the tribunal of the pope and of Jeſus Chriſt is one and the ſame. The pope, he adds, in another part of this work, can depoſe kings, either on account of their being incapable of governing, or becauſe they are too weak defenders of the church. He may therefore on the above accounts, and for the correction and example of kings, puniſh the defaulters with death.

much more reſpectable and happy (20) as the body to which they belong ſhall be more powerful. Prieſts of all ages have therefore been ſolely employed in increaſing the eccleſiaſtic power (21). Every where the clergy have been ambitious, and every where they muſt be ſo.

But does the ambition of that body neceſſarily produce public calamity? Yes; if that body cannot gratify its ambition but by actions contrary to the public welfare. It was of little ſignificance that in Greece Lycurgus, Leonidas, and Timoleon, that at Rome Brutus, Emilius, and Regulus, were ambitious. That paſſion could not diſplay itſelf in them but by ſervices done to their country. It is not ſo with the clergy; they would have a ſupreme authority, which they cannot obtain but by depriving the legal poſſeſſors of it. They muſt therefore make a perpetual ſecret war on the temporal power, and for that purpoſe weaken the authority of princes and magiſtrates, and let looſe intolerance: by that they can ſhake thrones, by that they can degrade the people *, render them at

* The ignorance of the people is frequently fatal to the prince. Among ſuch a people every ſovereign, reprobated by his clergy, is thought to be juſtly reprobated. It is not therefore without cauſe that the church has made *poorneſs of ſpirit* to be one of the firſt Chriſtian virtues. What part of the works of M. Rouſſeau do the religious moſt approve? Thoſe in which he is the panegyriſt of ignorance.

once

once poor*, idle, and ſtupid. All the ſteps by which the clergy mount to ſupreme power are therefore ſo many public calamities. It is papiſm that will one day deſtroy in France the laws and the parliaments; a deſtruction that always foretells the corruption of national manners, and the ruin of an empire.

In vain do they deny the ambition of the clergy. The ſtudy of man will prove it to them who apply themſelves to it, and the ſtudy of hiſtory to thoſe who read that of the church. From the moment it inſtituted a temporal chief, that chief propoſed the humiliation of kings; he would at his pleaſure diſpoſe of their lives and their crowns. Such was his deſign. To effect it, the princes themſelves muſt concur in their degradation; and for that purpoſe the prieſt muſt inſinuate himſelf into their confidence, become their counſellor, and participate their authority: and in this prieſts have ſucceeded. This however was not all, they found it neceſſary to eſtabliſh by degrees the opinion of the pre-eminence of the ſpiritual power over that of the temporal. For this pur-

* Why does the church in its inſtitutions never conſult the public welfare? Why celebrate feaſts and Sundays ſometimes in a rainy harveſt ſeaſon? Two or three days are frequently ſufficient to get in a third or fourth of the grain, and ſo far prevent a ſcarcity or famine. This the clergy know; but what has the public good to do with the ſchemes of their ambition? The intereſt of the eccleſiaſtics and that of the nation have nothing in common.

poſe the popes heaped eccleſiaſtical honours on whoever, like Bellarmin, made ſovereigns the ſubjects to the pope, and declared a doubt on that point to be a hereſy.

This opinion once eſtabliſhed, the church could hurl its anathemas, preach up croiſades againſt monarchs rebellious to its orders *, and blow up diſcord every where; it could in the name of the God of peace maſſacre a part of mankind †. What it could do, it did. Its power ſoon equalled that of the ancient Celtic prieſts, who, under the name of Druids, commanded over the Britons, Gauls, and Scandinavians, excommunicated princes, and ſacrificed them to their intereſt or caprice.

But to diſpoſe of the lives of princes it was neceſſary to ſubdue the minds of the people. By what art did the prieſts effect this?

* The bull *in cœna domini* declares in this reſpect all the pretenſions of the church, and the acceptation of that bull all the ſtupidity of certain nations.

† In a work on intolerance, M. de Malveaux ſays, that the Papiſtical, like the Mahometan religion, cannot maintain itſelf but by puniſhments and murder. With what horror ſhould this conſideration inſpire us againſt Papiſm!

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the means employed by the church to bring nations under its ſubjection.

THESE means are ſimple. To be independent of the prince, the clergy muſt derive their power from God: they ſaid it, and the people believed it.

To be obeyed in preference to kings, they muſt be conſidered as inſpired by the Divinity: they ſaid it, and the people believed it.

To bring human reaſon under their ſubjection, God muſt be ſuppoſed to ſpeak by their mouths: they ſaid it, and the people believed it.

Then adds the church, by declaring myſelf infallible, I am ſo; and by declaring myſelf the avenger of God, I become ſuch. Therefore in this auguſt employ, my enemy, is the enemy of the Moſt High, and is, by an infallible church, declared a heretic.

Therefore, whether he be a prince or not, whatever title the offender may bear, the church has a right to impriſon, torture, and burn him *.

* If the prieſts in general be cruel, it is becauſe, being formerly ſacrificers and butchers, they ſtill retain the ſpirit of their original employment.

What is a king before the Eternal? All men in his eyes, and in the eyes of the church, are equal.

Now when in conſequence of theſe principles the church, by virtue of its infallibility, had aſſumed and exerciſed the power of perſecuting, it became redoubtable to all people, all bowed down before it, and fell at the feet of the prieſts. Every man in ſhort, (whatever his rank), becoming thus ſubject to the clergy, acknowledged in them a power ſuperior to that of magiſtrates and monarchs.

Such were the means by which the prieſts ſubdued the people, and made princes tremble; ſo that wherever the church has erected a tribunal of inquiſition, its throne is placed above that of the ſovereign.

But in thoſe countries where the church cannot arm itſelf with the inquiſitorial power, how does it triumph over the power of the prince? By perſuading him, as at Vienna and in France, that he reigns by religion; that its miniſters, ſo often the deſtroyers of kings, are their ſupporters, and in ſhort, that his throne is founded on the altar.

But we know that in China, in India, and in all the Eaſt, thrones reſt ſecure by their own ſtrength: and we know that in the Weſt, it has been the prieſts who have overthrown them; that religion, oftener than the ambition of the great, has created regicides: that in the preſent ſtate of Europe monarchs have nothing to fear but fanaticiſm.

Can

Can thoſe monarchs ſtill doubt the audacity of a body that has ſo often declared them to be under its juriſdiction?

This haughty pretenſion would doubtleſs have at length opened the eyes of princes, if the church, according to times and circumſtances, had not on this point appeared ſucceſſively to change its opinion.

CHAP. XXVII.

Of the time when the church will lay aſide its pretenſions.

WHEN the ſpirit of the age is but little favourable to the enterprizes of the prieſthood; when the lights of philoſophy have illumined all ranks of men; when the military have more diſcernment, and are more attached to the prince than to the clergy; when the ſovereign himſelf, by being more intelligent, becomes more reſpectable to the church, it will then lay aſide its ferocity, moderate its zeal, and publicly avow the independence of the prince. But will this avowal be ſincere? Will it be the effect of neceſſity or prudence, or the real perſuaſion of the clergy? A proof that the church does not by its ſilence abandon its pretenſions, is that it always teaches the ſame doctrine at Rome. The clergy affect without doubt the greateſt reſpect for royalty; they

would have it honoured even in tyrants (22). But its maxims in this reſpect prove leſs its attachment to ſovereigns, than an indifference and contempt for the happineſs of men and of nations.

What is the tyranny of bad kings to the church, provided it can partake of their power? The angel of darkneſs carried the ſon of man to the top of a mountain, and ſaid to him, You here ſee all the kingdoms of the earth, worſhip me and I will make thee maſter of them all. The church ſays in like manner to the prince, Be my ſlave, the executor of my barbarities, worſhip me, inſpire the people with a fear of the prieſt, and plunge them in ignorance and ſtupidity, and I will give thee an unlimited empire over thy ſubjects: then ſhalt thou be a tyrant. What a monſtrous treaty between deſpotiſm and the ſacerdotal power!

The church teaches, they ſay, to reſpect princes and magiſtrates: but does it honour them, when in Spain it appoints them to be the executioners of its inquiſition, and in France its jailors *, and orders them to impriſon whoever does not think as they do? It is to degrade princes to charge them with ſuch employments. It is to hate the people to command them to ſubmit to the moſt inhuman tyrants. Does the church moreover ſet them the

* In Catholic countries they inquire carefully whether a peaſant be a Calviniſt or go to maſs; but never if he have any bacon in his pot.

example?

example? does it humble itſelf before thoſe princes it calls heretics?

A ſecret enemy to the temporal power, the prieſthood, according to the time and the character of kings, either flatters or inſults them. The moment a ſovereign ceaſes to be their ſlave, an anathema is ſuſpended over his head: if the monarch be weak, the anathema is hurled, he is the ſport of his clergy; but if he be ſagacious and reſolute, his clergy will reſpect him.

The pope refuſed the demands of Valdemar, king of Denmark, and that prince ſent him the following meſſage: "We owe our life to God, "our kingdom to our people, our riches to our "forefathers, and our faith to your predeceſſors, "which, if you do not grant our requeſt, we here-"by ſend you back*." Such ſhould be the ſtyle of every prudent prince to the court of Rome: he that can brave it has nothing to fear from it.

Prieſts, from the effeminacy of their education, are puſillanimous; they have the beard of a man, and the heart of a woman. Imperious toward thoſe that fear them, and cowardly toward thoſe that reſiſt them. Henry VIII. was a proof of this.

An unſucceſsful conſpiracy under ſuch a king is the ſignal for the total deſtruction of the prieſts;

* Vitam habemus a Deo, regnum ab incolis, divitias a parentibus, fidem a tuis predeceſſoribus, quam, ſi nobis non faves, remittimus per preſentes.

this

this they know, and terror in this case holds their arm. Against whom do they raise it? Princes, either weak or good. Had Henry IV. paid less respect to the sacerdotal power he would not have been its victim. He that dreads the clergy renders them dreadful. But if the power of the church depends on opinion, when that opinion is weakened, is not its power diminished? I answer, it remains entire so long as it is not entirely annihilated. To regain its credit, it is sufficient that a priest gain the confidence of the prince; this confidence gained, he will banish all intelligent men from the presence of the monarch. Such men are the invisible props of a throne and a magistracy against the sacerdotal power. Once banished the empire, the people, directed by the priests, will again fall into their ancient stupidity, and monarchs into their ancient slavery.

Perhaps the present temper of mankind is but little favourable to the clergy; but a body that is immortal ought never to despair of its credit. So long as it subsists it has lost nothing. To recover its former power, nothing more is necessary than to watch the opportunity, seize it, and constantly pursue its end. The rest is the work of time.

A body that, like the clergy, enjoys immense riches, may patiently wait the opportunity. If it cannot preach up croisades against sovereigns and attack them openly, it has still left the resource of fanaticism

fanaticiſm againſt every prince that has not ſufficient reſolution to eſtabliſh the law of toleration*.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Of the time when the church will renew its pretenſions.

WHEN a weak and ſuperſtitious prince poſſeſſes the throne of a great empire; when the church there erects a tribunal of inquiſition, and, enriched with the ſpoils of heretics, becomes every day more wealthy and powerful; and by horrible multiplied cruelties terrifies the minds of men, extinguiſhes the light of ſcience, and brings back the darkneſs of ſtupidity: the church will then have a ſovereign command, and renew its pretenſions. The reign of the monarch will be the age of ſacerdotal grandeur; and if the ſame cauſes neceſſarily produce the ſame effects, the people become ſlaves to the church will acknowledge it to be poſſeſſed of a power ſuperior to that of the ſovereign. The prince then humbled, and deprived of the aid of his ſubjects, will be nothing more to his clergy than a private citizen, expoſed to

* Wherever ſeveral religions and ſeveral ſects are tolerated, they become inſenſibly habituated to each other; their zeal loſes every day ſomething of its acrimony. Where a full toleration is eſtabliſhed there are few fanatics.

the

the ſame contempt, the ſame indignities, and the ſame chaſtiſement as the meaneſt of his ſubjects. Whether this conduct be criminal or not, ſuperſtition juſtifies it. The avowed infallibility of a body legitimates all its crimes.

CHAP. XXIX.

The pretenſions of the church proved by right.

THE governments of Germany and France have freed the ſubjects from the butcheries of an inquiſition. But by what right, ſays the church, do thoſe governments ſet bounds to my power? Was it with my conſent they baniſhed my inquiſitors? Have I not inceſſantly recalled them into thoſe empires *? Do not the clergy of Spain and Portugal regard the inquiſition as ſalutary? Have the prelates of France and Germany charged that tribunal with being impious and prejudicial? Have they ſeparated themſelves from the communion of thoſe cruel prieſts †, becauſe they

* Among the papers of the Jeſuits that were ſeized, the procurer general of the parliament of Aix found under the name of a council of conſcience the project of an inquiſition. What the Jeſuits were not able to effect in the reign of Lewis XIV. they apparently hoped to execute under a more favourable reign.

† The biſhops ſhould take example by St. Martin. That prelate learned that Maximilian had executed the heretic Priſcilian; that a Spaniſh biſhop named Ithacius, a man given up

had burned their brethren. In ſhort, is there a Catholic country where, at leaſt by their ſilence, the biſhops have not approved the inquiſition? Now what is the church? An aſſembly of eccleſiaſtics. Does the church declare itſelf the avenger of God? That right of vengeance is to perſecute men. The ſame infallibility that has given the church that right, has authoriſed the church to execute it, as well over kings, as over the meaneſt of their ſubjects (23).

But does the majeſty of princes, it may be ſaid, ought to humble itſelf before the pride of the prieſts? Ought it ſubmit to the puniſhments inflicted by the ſacerdotal power? Why not, the church will reply? What is their pretended majeſty? An abſolute nullity before the Eternal and

up to debauchery, atrocious, intriguing, and cruel, had obtained that ſentence by ſurpriſe: he went to Maximilian, repreſented to him that religion ought not to ſhed human blood, and reproached him bitterly with that crime.

While St. Martin remained at Treves the heretics were undiſturbed. After his departure the biſhops, aſſiſted by Ithacius, again ſolicited Maximilian, and engaged him to retract the promiſe he made St. Martin: they even accuſed that ſaint of hereſy, and proſcribed the ſectaries. St. Martin being informed of it, would no longer communicate with theſe perſecutors. Some time after he relaxed, and in hopes of ſaving the reſt of the Priſcilians, and to ſuſpend the religious perſecutions, he conſented to aſſiſt with theſe biſhops at the ordination of him of Treves: but ſoon repented of it. He atributed to this weakneſs the loſs of the gift of miracles, and declared his condeſcenſion to be a crime; which he expiated by a long penitence.

his

his miniſters. Can the vain title of king annihilate the rights of the clergy? They cannot loſe their rights. Whether prince or ſubject be guilty of hereſy, the ſame crime demands the ſame puniſhment. Beſide, if the conduct of a prince be a law to the people; if his example can authorize their impiety, it is the blood of kings eſpecially that the intereſt of God and the prieſt requires. The church made it flow in the time of Henry III. and Henry IV. and the church is always the ſame. The doctrine of Bellarmin is the doctrine of Rome and of its ſeminaries. "The firſt Chriſtians, ſays "that doctor, had a right to kill Nero, and all the "princes, their perſecutors. If they ſuffered with-"out complaining, it was from a want of confi-"dence, and not a want of right." Samuel had no right that the Catholic church, that ſpouſe of God (24), has not ſtill. Now Agag was a king: Samuel commanded Saul to murder that king; Saul heſitated; he was proſcribed, and his ſcepter given to another. Let Chriſtians, inſtructed by this example know, that the moment God commands the puniſhment of a king, by the mouth of a prieſt, it is the Chriſtian's part to obey. To heſitate is a crime.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

The pretenſions of the church proved by facts.

THE ſame rights, ſays the church, that my infallibility has given me over kings, an immemorial poſſeſſion has confirmed to me. Princes have all times been my ſlaves, and I have always ſhed human blood. In vain do the impious cite againſt me this paſſage; "Render to Cæſar the things that are Cæſar's." If Cæſar be a heretic, what ſhould the church render him? Death *.

Is it for Catholics to read and quote the ſcriptures? Do they pretend, like Proteſtants and Quakers, to ſearch out their ſenſe, and be their interpreters? the letter killeth, but the ſpirit maketh alive.

Let Catholics, by the example of the ſaints, humbly adore the deciſions of the church, and acknowledge its power over the temporalities of kings. That Thomas of Canterbury, that intriguing, ungrateful, audacious prieſt, as they call him, was a moſt lively defender of the ſacerdotal rights, and his zeal has placed him in the rank of ſaints. Let the vile laics, thoſe inſects of dark-

* It was thus in the time of Henry III. and Henry IV. of Clement and Ravaillac, that the Sorbonniſts interpreted this paſſage.

neſs, humble their reaſon before the incomprehenſible ſcriptures, and attend their interpretation in ſilence: it is enough for them to know that all authority is from God, revealed to his vicar, and that there is no one independent of the pope. The catholic princes have in vain endeavoured to free themſelves from that holy yoke; they have not themſelves been yet able to determine the preciſe bounds of the two authorities *. How can they reproach the church, when they acknowledge its infallibility? It is therefore void of ambition. The moſt authentic teſtimonies of its own hiſtory cannot depoſe againſt it. In ſhort, the moſt clear demonſtrations are inſufficient to prove it guilty of any crimes.

Europe now denies the infallibility of the church; but there was no doubt made of it when the clergy transfered to the Spaniards the crown of Montezuma, when they armed the Weſt againſt the Eaſt, when they ordered their ſaints to preach up croiſades, and, in ſhort, diſpoſed of the crowns of Aſia at their pleaſure. What the church could do in Aſia, it can do in Europe alſo.

* Is it impoſſible to fix theſe bounds? No. If the prieſts, as they ſay, pretend to nothing but ſpiritual authority, and property of that ſort, they ſhould be allowed to exerciſe no authority but in the land of ſpirits. As to property, they ſhould have ſuch only as is the moſt aerial or ſpiritual; conſequently all, from the pinnacle of the cordeliers to the empyrean, ſhould be theirs; but all the reſt ſhould belong to kings and republics.

What

What moreover are the rights claimed by the clergy? Thoſe that have been enjoyed by prieſts of all religions. In the time of paganiſm, were not the moſt magnificent gifts carried in Sweden to the famous temple of Upſal? The moſt ſumptuous offerings, ſays M. Mallet, were, in times of public or private calamities made to the Druids. Now at the time the catholic prieſts ſucceeded to the wealth and power of thoſe Druids, they had, like them, a part in all the revolutions of Sweden. How many ſeditions were excited by the archbiſhops of Upſal! How many changes made by them in the form of government! The throne itſelf was not then a protection againſt the power of thoſe redoubtable prelates. If they aſked the blood of princes, the people haſted to ſhed it. Such were in Sweden the rights of the church.

In Germany they obliged the emperors, with bare heads and feet, to come before the pope and acknowledge in him the ſupreme authority.

In France they commanded the kings, ſtripped of their habits by the miniſters of religion, to be bound to the altars, and there ſcourged with rods, that they might expiate the crimes of which the church accuſed them.

In Portugal the inquiſition diſinterred the body of Don John IV.* to abſolve him from an excommunication he had not incurred.

* The crime of Don John was his forbidding the inquiſitors to appropriate the goods of their victims; though that prohi-

At the time of the difference between Paul V. and the regency of Venice, the church anathematiſed the learned man whoſe pen had revenged the public; it did more, it aſſaſſinated father Paul, and no one conteſted the right *. Europe ſaw the action, and held a reſpectful ſilence concerning it.

When Rome in like manner anathematiſed the lord of Milan †; when it declared the Melateſta, Ordolaphe, and Monfredi heretics, and publiſhed croiſades againſt them ‡, the princes of Europe were ſilent, and their ſilence was a tacit acknowledgement of the right now claimed by the church; a right exerciſed by it in all times, and founded on the unſhakable baſe of infallibility.

bition was not contrary even to the new bull that the Dominicans, unknown to that prince, had obtained of the pope.

* Father Paul, on receiving a ſtab with a poignard while he was ſaying maſs, pronounced as he fell thoſe celebrated words, *aguoſco ſtylum Romanum.*

† The only crime of which the pope accuſed Viſconti was, that in quality of vaſſal of the empire he had ſhewn too much zeal in the cauſe of the emperor Lewis of Bavaria: for this zeal he was declared a heretic.

‡ The crime of Malateſta was the ſurpriſing of Rimini; that of Ordolaphe and Manfredi, the making themſelves maſters of Faenza, on which the pope had formed pretenſions. All the popes were then uſurpers, and all their enemies were declared heretics. Theſe popes however confeſſed, but did not reſtore. Their ſucceſſors enjoy without ſcruple what the others unlawfully obtained. This enjoyment might be regarded as a myſtery of iniquity; I would rather regard it as a myſtery of theology.

Now

Now what anſwer can be given to this croud of examples and reaſonings on which the clergy found their pretenſions? The church once acknowledged infallible, and the ſole interpreter of the ſcriptures (25), every right it pretends to is a right eſtabliſhed; there can be none of its deciſions that are not true: to doubt them is impiety. If it declare a king to be a heretic, he becomes ſuch: if it condemn him to puniſhment, he muſt ſuffer it. However barbarous or intolerant a body may be, if we allow it to be infallible, we have no right to judge its actions: to deny its juſtice is to deny the immediate and evident conſequence of the principle we admit. I ſhall not purſue this matter further, but content myſelf with obſerving, that if it be true, as I have ſaid above, that every man, or at leaſt every body of men, are ambitious, then,

Their ambition is either virtuous or vicious, according to the means they employ to gratify it.

That the means employed by the church are always deſtructive of the happineſs of a nation.

That its grandeur, founded on intolerance, muſt depauperate a nation, degrade the magiſtrates, and endanger the life of the ſovereign; in ſhort, that the intereſt of the ſacerdotal power can never coincide with that of the public.

From theſe ſeveral facts we muſt conclude that religion, (not that gentle and tolerant religion eſtabliſhed by Jeſus), but that of the prieſts, by

right of which they declare themſelves the avengers of the Divinity, and pretend to the right of perſecuting and burning their brethren, is a religion of diſcord * and of blood; a regicidal religion, and on which an ambitious clergy may always eſtabliſh thoſe horrid rights of which they have ſo frequently made uſe.

But what can kings do againſt the ambition of the church? Refuſe it, as do certain ſects of Chriſtians,

1. The qualification of infallibility;

2. The excluſive right of interpreting the ſcriptures;

3. The title of the avenger of the Divinity.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the means of reſtraining eccleſiaſtical ambition.

WHEN it is left to God to take his own vengeance, and to puniſh heretics; and the inhabitants of the earth do not arrogate to themſelves the right of judging offences done againſt heaven (26); in ſhort, when the precept of toleration becomes a precept of public inſtruction, the prieſthood having no longer any pretence for per-

* If religion be ſometimes a pretence for troubles and civil wars, the true cauſe is, they ſay, the ambition and avarice of princes; but without the aid of an intolerant religion, their ambition would never arm a hundred thouſand men.

ſecuting

ſecuting mankind, fomenting the people, and uſurping the temporal power, their ambition will be extinct. Then, diveſted of their ferocity, they will no longer curſe their ſovereigns, nor arm a Ravaillac, nor open the gates of heaven to regicides. If faith be a gift of heaven, they who have it not deſerve to be pitied, not puniſhed. It is the exceſs of inhumanity to perſecute an unfortunate perſon. By what fatality is it then practiſed in matters of religion?

Toleration eſtabliſhed, heaven would no longer be the reward of murder and the moſt atrocious attempts.

Beſide, whether a prince be barbarous or beneficent, a Buſiris or a Trajan, it is always his intereſt to eſtabliſh toleration. It is the ſlaves of the church only that it permits to be tyrants. Now Buſiris would not be a ſlave.

With regard to a prince that is virtuous and jealous of the happineſs of his ſubjects, what will be his principal care? That of weakening the power of the prieſthood. It is the clergy that will always moſt ſtrongly oppoſe the execution of his benevolent projects. The ſpiritual power is always either the open or ſecret enemy * of the

* When a ſovereign grants favour and conſideration to bigots, he furniſhes his enemy with arms. His foreign enemies are the neighbouring princes; his domeſtic are the theologians. Should he increaſe their power? The multiplicity of religions in a kingdom makes firm the throne. Sectaries cannot be

temporal. The church is a tyger; when chained by the law of toleration, it is gentle; when the chain is broke, it reſumes its former fury. By what the church has formerly done, princes may judge what it would again do if it were poſſeſſed of its former power. The paſt ſhould inform them of the future.

The magiſtrate who flatters himſelf with making the ſpiritual and temporal powers concur in the ſame object, that is, the public good, deceives himſelf: their intereſts are too oppoſite. It is with theſe two powers, ſometimes united to devour the ſame people, as with two neighbouring and jealous nations, that leagued againſt a third, attack and ſubdue it, that they may part the ſpoil between them.

No empire can be wiſely governed by two ſupreme and independent powers. It is from one alone, either divided into ſeveral, or united in the hands of a monarch, that all law ought to proceed.

Toleration ſubjects the prieſt to the prince; intoleration the prince to the prieſt. It infers two rival powers in an empire.

Perhaps the ancients, in the partition they made of the univerſe between Oromazes and Arimanes, and in the recital of their perpetual combats, meant

maintained but by thoſe of other ſects. In morality, as in phyſics, it is the equilibrium of oppoſite forces that produces reſt.

nothing

nothing more than the perpetual war between the ſacerdotal and temporal powers. The reign of Oromazes was that of light and virtue: ſuch ſhould be the reign of the laws. The reign of Arimanes was that of darkneſs and wickedneſs; and ſuch ought to be that of the prieſthood and ſuperſtition.

Who are the diſciples of Oromazes? The philoſophers, at preſent ſo perſecuted in France by the monks, the miniſters of Arimanes. Of what crimes are they accuſed? None. They have, as far as was in their power, enlightened mankind; freed them from the infamous yoke of ſuperſtition; and it is perhaps to their writings that princes and magiſtrates owe, in part, the preſervation of their authority.

The ignorance of the people, the mother of a ſtupid devotion (27), is a poiſon, that ſublimed by religious chemiſts, ſpreads round the throne the mortal exhalations of ſuperſtition. The learning of the philoſophers, on the contrary, is a pure and ſacred fire, that drives far from kings the peſtilential vapours of fanaticiſm.

The prince who ſubjects himſelf and his people to the ſacerdotal empire, drives from him his virtuous ſubjects: he reigns, but it is over the ſuperſtitious only; over a people whoſe minds are totally degraded; in ſhort, over ſlaves to the prieſt. Theſe ſlaves are men dead to their country; they ſerve it not, either by their talents, or their courage.

A country where there is an inquiſition cannot be the country of an honeſt citizen (28). Unhappy is the nation where the monk perſecutes with impunity whoever deſpiſes his legends, and does not believe in witchcraft and fairies; where he drags to puniſhment the virtuous man, *who does good, offends no one, and ſpeaks the truth.* Under the reign of fanaticiſm, ſays M. Hume, in the life of Mary of England, the moſt perſecuted, were the moſt honeſt and diſcerning. From the moment bigotry takes in hand the reins of an empire, virtue and talents are baniſhed: then the minds of men fall into a dejection, and the only one that is perhaps incurable.

However critical the ſituation of a people may be, one great man is ſometimes alone ſufficient to change the face of affairs. The war broke out between France and England; France had at firſt the advantage: Mr. Pitt was raiſed to the miniſtry; the Engliſh nation reſumed its ſpirit, and the naval officers their intrepidity. The puniſhment of an admiral produced this change. The miniſter communicated the activity of his genius to the commanders of his enterprizes: the avidity of the ſoldier and the ſailor, awakened by the allurements of gain and plunder, reanimated their courage; and nothing was leſs ſimilar than the Engliſh at the beginning and the end of the war.

Mr. Pitt, it will be ſaid, ruled over free men: it is doubtleſs eaſy to inſpire the ſpirit of life into ſuch

ſuch a people. In every other country what uſe can be made of the powerful reſource of patriotic love? If in the Eaſt a citizen ſhould make the intereſt of his nation his own; if he ſhould participate the glory, the ſhame and misfortune of his country, and it ſhould ſink under a load of calamities, can ſuch a man ever pretend to name the authors of thoſe evils? If he name them he is loſt. A good citizen, under certain governments, muſt therefore be puniſhed as ſuch, or ceaſe to be ſuch. Is it ſo in France? I know not. But this I know, that the only miniſter who in the laſt war could have given ſome energy to the nation was the duke de Choiſeul. His birth, his courage, the elevation of his character, the vivacity of his conceptions, would doubtleſs have reanimated the French, if they had been capable of reanimation; but bigotry then commanded too imperiouſly over the great (29). Such was its power over them, that at the time France was beat on every ſide, and ſaw her colonies raviſhed from her, nothing was regarded at Paris but the affair of the Jeſuits *; no efforts were made but for them.

*When the affair of the Jeſuits was in agitation, if news came to Paris of the loſs of a battle, it was ſcarce regarded for a day; the next day they talked of the expulſion of the holy fathers. Thoſe fathers, to divert the public from inveſtigating their conſtitutions, exclaimed inceſſantly againſt the Encyclopediſts. They attributed the bad ſucceſs of the French arms to the progreſs of philoſophy; it is that, they ſaid, debauches the minds of the generals and ſoldiers: the devout were convinced

Such was the ſpirit that reigned at Conſtantinople when beſieged by Mahomet the Second; the miniſters held councils at the very time that ſultan took poſſeſſion of the ſuburbs. Bigotry contracts the ſpirit of the people; toleration extends it. That alone can diveſt the French of their devout ferocity.

However ſuperſtitious or fanatic a nation may be, its character will be always ſuſceptible of divers forms which it will receive from its laws, its

vinced it was ſo. A thouſand jackdaws repeated the ſame words: and yet it was the very philoſophic people of England, and the ſtill more philoſophic king of Pruſſia, who beat thoſe French generals that no one ſuſpected of philoſophy.

On the other hand, the lovers of ancient muſic maintained that the misfortunes of France were owing to the taſte for buffoons, and Italian muſic; for that muſic, according to them, had entirely corrupted the French manners. I was then at Paris. It is not to be imagined how ridiculous ſuch notions, maintained by what the French call good company, made them appear to foreigners.

Good ſenſe was treated, by almoſt all the great ladies, as impiety: they talked of nothing but the reverend father Berthier; nor meaſured the merit of any man but by the ſize of his miſſal.

In every funeral oration they harangued on nothing but the devotion of the deceaſed; and his panegyric was reduced to this *That the great man ſo extolled was an ideot, whom the monks had always led by the noſe.* There was no exhortation or ſermon that did not end with ſome ſatyric invective againſt the philoſophers and Encyclopediſts. The preacher, toward the end of his diſcourſe, advanced to the edge of his pulpit, like a caſtrato to the edge of the ſtage, the one to make his epigramatic point, and the other his finiſhing note. If the preacher had forgot, the audience would have called for his epigram, as they do on harlequin for his antic bow.

government,

government, and eſpecially its public education. Inſtruction can do all things; and if I have in the preceding ſections ſcrupulouſly detailed the evils produced by an ignorance of which many people now declare themſelves the fautors, it was that I might more clearly ſhew all the importance of education.

What are the means to improve it to the greateſt degree?

Perhaps there are ages, when content to ſketch out a grand plan, we ought not to flatter ourſelves with ſeeing it executed.

It is with the examen of this queſtion that I ſhall conclude this work.

NOTES.

NOTES.

1. (Page 296.) IGNORANCE rebels against contradiction. The man of discernment can suffer it, because, being a scrupulous examiner of himself, he frequently detects his own errors. The ignorant are not sensible of the want of instruction: they think they know all things. Who does not examine himself thinks he is infallible, as do most men, especially the French petit maitre. I have always observed him astonished at his small success among foreigners. He should know, that if it be necessary in the ports of the Levant to speak the language of the place, it is also necessary, if he would make himself understood, to speak the language of good sense, and that a petit maitre always appears ridiculous, when in place of the language of reason he substitutes the modish jargon of his country.

2. (p. 297.) General truths enlighten the public without personally offending the man in place; why then does he not excite writers to the search after truths of this sort? Because they sometimes oppose his projects.

3. (p 305.) It is not the novelty of a theologic opinion that offends, but the violence employed to force its reception. This violence has sometimes produced strong commotions in empires. A noble and elevated soul bears with impatience the slavish yoke of the priest; and the persecuted always avenge themselves of the persecutor. Man, says Machiavel, has a right to think all things, speak all things, write all things, but not to impose his opinions. Let the theologian persuade or convince me, but let him not pretend to force my belief.

4. (ibid.) The only intolerable religion is an intolerant religion. When such a religion becomes the most powerful in an empire, it lights up the torch of war, and plunges the people in numberless troubles and calamities.

5. (ibid.) When princes are indifferent to theological disputes, the haughty theologians, after having furiously railed at each other, are tired of writing without being read: the contempt of the public puts them to silence.

6. (p. 309.)

6. (p. 309.) A prudent legiſlator always employs ſome celebrated writer to publiſh ſuch new laws as he would eſtabliſh. After thoſe laws have been ſometime expoſed to the judgment of the public under the name of that author, and have been approved, they are then received without oppoſitoin.

7. (ibid.) When a miniſter makes a law, or a philoſopher diſcovers a truth, till the utility of that law, and that truth be eſtabliſhed, they are both expoſed to the rage of envy and bigotry. Their ſituation is yet very different: the miniſter, armed with power, is expoſed to invective only; but the philoſopher, deſtitute of power, is ſubject to perſecution alſo.

8. (p. 310.) We hear men every day extol the excellency of certain foreign eſtabliſhments, but theſe eſtabliſhments, they add, are not compatible with ſuch a form of government. If this be true in ſome particular caſes, it is falſe in moſt. Is the criminal proceſs of the Engliſh the moſt proper to protect innocence? Why then do not the French, Germans, and Italians adopt it?

9. (ibid.) Princes daily change the laws of commerce; ſuch as regulate the collection of taxes and cuſtoms; they can therefore equally change every law contrary to the public good. Did Trajan think a republican government preferable to monarchy? He offered to change that form of government; he offered liberty to the Romans, and would have given it them, if they would have accepted it. Such an action doubtleſs deſerves the higheſt commendation; it has filled the world with admiration. But is it ſo ſupernatural as ſome men imagine? Is it not evident that by breaking the fetters of the Romans, Trajan would have preſerved the greateſt authority over a people ſet free by his generoſity; that he would have then derived from love and gratitude almoſt all the power he owed to his army. Now what can be more flattering than the firſt of theſe powers! Few princes have imitated Trajan; few men, I confeſs, have made a ſacrifice of their private authority to the intereſt of the public: but their exceſſive love of deſpotiſm is ſometimes leſs the want of virtue, than the want of diſcernment.

10. (p. 312.) There is but one thing really contrary to every ſort of conſtitution, and that is the miſery of the people. Though a prince command them, he has no right to injure them.

them. If he knowingly make a treaty diſadvantageous to his people, he exceeds his power, and renders himſelf criminal toward them.

A monarch can never have any more right than his anceſtors. Now every legitimate ſovereignty is founded on election, on the free choice of the people. It is therefore evident that every ſupreme magiſtrate, whatever title he bear, is nothing more than the firſt deputy or commiſſioner of his nation; and no commiſſioner has a right to make a contract diſadvantageous to thoſe that appoint him. The ſociety may at all times even reclaim its own appointments if they be too oppreſſive.

When two nations conclude a treaty between them, they have, like private perſons, no other object than their reciprocal advantage and happineſs; when this reciprocal advantage no longer ſubſiſts, the treaty becomes void: one of the two nations may break it. Ought they to do it? No: if there reſult but a ſmall damage to them from obſerving it; for then it would be better to ſuffer that damage, than be regarded as too eaſy violaters of their engagements. Now in the motives themſelves that make thoſe two people obſerve their treaty, we ſee the right that every people have to diſanul a treaty, when it is evidently deſtructive to their happineſs.

11. (p. 312.) If in deſpotic governments the military be inwardly hated and deſpiſed, it is becauſe the people regard the beys and pachas as jailers and hangmen. If in the Greek and Roman republics the ſoldier was, on the contrary, loved and reſpected, it was becauſe, armed againſt the common enemy, he would not march againſt their countrymen.

12. (ibid.) Is it enough that a ſultan rules by virtue of a law to render his authority legitimate? No: a uſurper might by ſuch a law, it may be ſaid, declare his reign legitimate twenty years after his uſurpation. Such an opinion is abſurd. No ſociety can, at the time of its eſtabliſhment, put into the hands of a man the power of diſpoſing of the property, the lives, and the liberty of the citizens at his pleaſure. All arbitrary power is an uſurpation againſt which a people may at all times revolt.

When the Romans would enervate the courage of a people, render them ignorant and baſe, in order to keep them in ſervitude, what did they? Set a deſpot over them. It was by this mean

mean they enſlaved the Spartans and the Britons. Now every conſtitution formed to corrupt the manners of the people, every form of government the conqueror impoſes for this purpoſe on the conquered, can never be cited as juſt and legal. Is that a government where all is reduced to the pleaſing and obeying a ſultan, where we ſometimes meet a ſtraggling inhabitant, but never a citizen?

Every people that groan under the yoke of arbitrary power have a right to throw it off. The laws that are ſacred are ſuch as are conformable to the public intereſt: every ordonance contrary to it is not a law, but a legal abuſe.

13. (p. 313.) As a deſpot has not a force ſufficient to ſubdue a nation by himſelf, he muſt effect it by the aid of his janiſſaries, his ſoldiers, and his army. If he diſpleaſe that army it revolts, and he is then without force: the ſcepter changes hands; he is condemned by thoſe that were his aſſociates; he is not judged, he is murdered. It is otherwiſe with the king who reigns by the authority of the magiſtrates and the laws. If he commit a crime puniſhable by thoſe laws, he is at leaſt heard in his defence, and the ſlowneſs of the proceeding always gives him time to prevent judgment being given againſt him, by repairing the injuſtice he has done.

A prince on the throne of a limited monarchy is always more firmly ſeated than on that of a deſpot.

14. (p. 333.) The juſtice of heaven has ever been a myſtery. The church thought formerly that in duels and combats God always took the part of the offended. Experience has diſproved this opinion of the church. We ſee that in duels heaven is always on the ſide of the ſtrongeſt and moſt ſkilful; and in combats on the ſide of the beſt troops and moſt able general.

15. (ibid.) Few philoſophers have denied the exiſtence of a creative power; "There is a cauſe of that which is, and that cauſe is unknown." Now whether we give to this cauſe the name of God, or any other, what matters it? The diſputes on this ſubject are but about words; it is not ſo with the moral Divinity. The oppoſition that is always found between the juſtice on earth and that of heaven, has frequently made his exiſtence doubtful. Beſide, they have ſaid, what is morality? Is it a collection of the conventions that the reciprocal wants of men have obliged them to make with each other? Now how can they make a god of the works of men?

10. (p. 347.)

16. (p. 347.) The proof of our little faith is the contempt we have for thoſe that change their religion. Nothing is certainly more commendable than to abandon an error to embrace the truth; whence then ariſes our contempt for a new convert? From the obſcure conviction we have that all religions are equally falſe. *(Our author, when ſpeaking of falſe religions, muſt be always underſtood to except the Chriſtian, or he would be continually contradicting himſelf,)* and therefore whoever changes his religion is influenced by ſome ſordid, and conſequently contemptible, motive.

17. (p. 348.) If the Morality of the Jeſuits had been the work of a laic, it would have been condemned as ſoon as printed; there are no perſecutions its author would not have ſuffered.

Before the parliaments interfered, that morality however was the only one generally taught in France. The biſhops approved it. The Sorbonne feared the Jeſuits; that fear rendered their principles reſpectable. It ſuch caſes, it is not the matter, but the author, that the clergy judge: they have always two weights and two meaſures: St. Thomas is an example. Machiavel, in his Prince, no where advances ſuch propoſitions as that ſaint teaches in his Commentaries on the 5th of the Politics, text xi. Theſe are his own words.

" Ad ſalvationem tyranidis, excellentes in potentia, vel di-
" vitiis interficere, quia tales per potentiam quod habent, poſ-
" ſunt inſurgere contra tyrannum. Iterum expedit interficere
" ſapientes. Tales enim per ſapientiam eorum, poſſunt inve-
" nire vias ad expellandam tyrannidem. Nec ſcholas, nec
" alias congregationes per quas continget vocare circa ſapien-
" tiam permittendnm eſt. Sapientes enim ad magna inclinan-
" tur, & adeo magnanimi ſunt & tales de facili inſurgunt. Ad
" ſalvandem tyrannidem oportet quod tyrannus procuret ut
" ſubditi imponant ſibi invicem crimina, & turbent ſeipſos, ut
" amicus amicum, & populus contra divites inter ſe diſſen-
" tiant. Sic enim minus poterunt inſurgere propter eorum
" diviſionem. Oportet enim ſubditos facere pauperes;
" ſic enim minus inſurgere contra tyrannum. Procreanda
" ſunt vectigalia, hoc eſt, exactiones multæ magnæ; ſic
" enim cito poterunt depauperari ſubditi. Tyrannus debet
" procura,e bella inter ſubditos, vel etiam extraneos, ita ut non

poſſunt

" poſſunt vacare ad aliquid tractandum contra tyrannum. Reg-
" num ſalvator per amicos. Tyrannus autem ad ſalvandam
" tyrannidem non debet confidere amicis". Text xii. he adds :

" Expedit tyrannus ad ſalvandam tyrannidem quod non ap-
" pareat ſubditis ſævus, ſeu crudelis. Nam ſi appareat ſævus,
" reddit ſe odioſum. Ex hoc autem facilius inſurgunt in eum,
" ſed debet ſe reddere reverendum propter excellentiam alicu-
" jus boni excellentis. Reverentia enim debetur bono excel-
" lenti ; & ſi non habeat bonum illud excellens, debet ſimulare
" ſe habere illud. Tyrannus debet ſe reddere talem ut vide-
" atur ſubditis ipſum excellere in aliquo bono excellenti in quo
" ipſi deficiunt, ex quo eum reverentur. Si non habeat vir-
" tutes, fecundum veritatem faciat ut opinentur habere eas."

" For the preſervation of tyranny, men of great power and
" riches muſt be deſtroyed, for ſuch by their power may riſe
" againſt the tyrant. It is alſo expedient to deſtroy men of ta-
" lents, for ſuch by their talents may find means to expel ty-
" ranny. Nor ſhould ſchools be permitted, or other aſſemblies,
" by which learning may be acquired ; for learned men have
" great diſpoſitions, and are magnanimous, and ſuch men eaſily
" rebel. For the ſupport of tyranny it is proper that the ty-
" rant contrive to make his ſubjects accuſe each other of
" crimes, and moleſt themſelves, ſo that friends may attack
" friends, the mean people the rich, and the rich one another ;
" for by their diviſions they will be the leſs able to riſe againſt
" him. It is alſo neceſſary to impoveriſh the people, for they
" will be thereby leſs able to riſe againſt the tyrant. Taxes
" ſhould be eſtabliſhed, that is, exactions, which ſhould be
" great, and in great number ; for thereby the ſubjects will be
" the ſooner impoveriſhed. The tyrant ſhould excite wars
" among his ſubjects, or elſe among ſtrangers, ſo that the peo-
" ple may have no opportunity to conſpire againſt the tyrant.
" A kingdom is ſupported by friends ; but a tyrant ought not
" to truſt to friends for the maintenance of tyranny.

" It is expedient that a tyrant, for the ſupport of tyranny, do
" not appear ſevere or cruel to his ſubjects : for by appearing
" cruel he will render himſelf odious ; which will make the
" people more readily riſe againſt him : but he ought to render
" himſelf reſpectable by an excellence in ſome eminent virtue:

" for all reſpect is due to virtue; and if he have no ſuch excel-
" lent quality, he ought to appear to have it. The tyrant
" ought ſo to deport himſelf as to appear to his ſubjects to excel
" in ſome eminent virtue in which they are deficient, and for
" which they may reſpect him. If he have no virtues, let him
" ſo deceive them, that they may think he has."

Such are the ideas of St. Thomas on this matter. Whether he regarded tyranny as an impiety or not, I may ſay with Naude, theſe are very ſtrange precepts in the mouth of a ſaint. I ſhall further obſerve that Machiavel in his Prince is nothing more than the commentator of St. Thomas. Now, if for offering the ſame ideas one writer be ſanctified, and his applauded works be put in the hands of all the world, and the other on the contrary be excommunicated, and his book condemned; it is evident that the church has two weights and two meaſures, and that its intereſt alone dictates its judgments.

18. (p. 349.) The monks ſtill diſpute, but they no longer reaſon. When their opinions are oppoſed, and objections are made to them, they cannot anſwer: they affirm that they have been a long time reſolved in their determinations, and in that caſe this anſwer is certainly the moſt artful. The people, it is true, now more diſcerning, know that the book prohibited is that, whoſe maxims are in general moſt conformable to the public welfare.

19. (p. 350.) If the hope of reward can alone excite men to the ſearch after truth, an indifference for it ſuppoſes a great diſproportion between the recompence annexed to its diſcovery, and the pains required in its inveſtigation. Why is the diſcoverer of a truth ſo often the object of perſecution? Becauſe the envious and the wicked have an intereſt in his perſecution. Why does the public at firſt take part againſt the philoſopher? Becauſe the public is ignorant, and being deceived at firſt by the cries of the fanatics, it becomes intoxicated with their fury. But it is with the public as with Philip of Macedon, we may always appeal from the drunken public to the ſober public. Why do men in power rarely make uſe of the truths diſcovered by philoſophers? Becauſe they rarely give themſelves any concern about the public welfare. But ſuppoſe they were anxious about it, and patroniſed the truth, what would be the conſequence? That it would be propagated with an incredible rapidity.

pidity. It is not so with error: when favoured by a potentate, it is generally, but not universally adopted. The truth has always its secret partisans: they form, so to say, so many conspirators, always ready, when opportunity offers, to declare for it. One word of a sovereign is sufficient to destroy error; but for truth, its root is indestructible: it is doubtless barren till fertilised by power; but it still subsists; and if the root owe its branches to power, it owes its existence to philosophy.

20. (p. 354.) Among the ecclesiastics there are without doubt some men that are honest, happy, and void of ambition; but these are not called to the government of that powerful body. The clergy, always governed by men of intrigue, will be always ambitious.

21. (ibid.) The church, constantly employed in promoting its power, reduces all the Christian virtues to abstinence, humility, and a blind submission: it never preaches the love of our country, nor of humanity.

22. (p. 360.) If the church sometimes forbids the laics to murder their prince, it always permits it to the clergy. This it proved by its own history. It is true, the theologians will say, the popes have deposed some sovereigns, preached up croisades against them, and beatified such men as Clement; but those legerities were the faults of the pontiff, and not of the church. With regard to the culpable silence of the bishops on this matter, it was, they add, the effect of a complaisance for the papal chair, and not an approbation of its conduct. But ought they to have been silent when such crimes were committed, and to have rose with so much fury against the pretended extravagant interpretation that Luther and Calvin gave of certain passages of scripture? Should men persecute error, and at the same time suffer the most heinous crimes to escape? Every man of sense must see, in the perpetual equivocal conduct of the church, that it had in reality but one view, and that was to be able, according to its various interests, by turns to approve or disapprove the same actions.

There is no proof of its ambition more evident than the project invented by the Jesuits of associating great men, princes, and even monarchs in their order; by that association, into which so many great men were already entered, kings became

the ſubjects of the Jeſuits and their general, and were nothing more than the vile executioners of their perſecutions.

But for the parliaments, who knows of this project, ſo boldly conceived, had not ſucceeded ?

23. (p. 365.) There is no inquiſition in France : however, ſays the church, they there impriſon at my deſire the Janſeniſt, the Calviniſt, and the Deiſt. They therefore tacitly acknowledge the right I have to perſecute. Now this right which the prince gives me over his ſubjects, I only wait an opportunity to claim over himſelf and his magiſtrates.

24. (p. 367.) The church calls herſelf the ſpouſe of God ; but wherefore I know not. The church is an aſſembly of the faithful : theſe faithful are bearded or unbearded, ſhod or unſhod, cowled or uncowled ; now that ſuch an aſſembly ſhould be the ſpouſe of the Divinity is a pretenſion beyond meaſure, ſtupid and ridiculous. If the word Church, *(Egliſe)*, had been maſculine, how would they have conſummated the marriage ?

25. (p. 371.) The church of France now refuſes the pope the right to diſpoſe of crowns ; but is the refuſal of that church ſincere, is it the effect of conviction ? Its paſt conduct muſt inform us. What reſpect can the clergy have for a human law, when they pretend, in quality of interpreters of the divine law, to the power of changing and modifying it at their will. Whoever aſſumes the right of interpreting a law, always concludes by making a law. The church in conſequence makes itſelf God ; though there be nothing leſs alike than the religion of Jeſus and that of the preſent papiſts.

How would the apoſtles be ſurpriſed, if they were to come again upon the earth and read a catechiſm they have not made ; if they ſhould be told that the clergy have lately forbid the laity even to read the ſcriptures, under the idle pretence of being ſcandaliſed by their weakneſs.

I ſhall mention on this occaſion a ſingular event ; it is an act of the Engliſh parliament, paſſed in 1414. In this act it is forbid, under pain of death, to read the ſcriptures in the vulgar tongue, that is, in a language they underſtood. What, ſay the reformed, has God collected in a book the duties that he enjoins men to perform ; and has that God, who is omniſcient, explained

plained his will ſo obſcurely, that we cannot underſtand it without an interpreter? Does not that Almighty Being, who has created man, know the extent of his underſtanding? O prieſt, what ideas have you of the Divine wiſdom?

Did the young man of Abbeville, who was proſecuted for pretended blaſphemy, ever pronounce any thing ſo horrible? He however was puniſhed with death, and you are reſpected. So true it is, that there is nothing but good luck and bad luck in this world, and that there is no man juſt but he who has power.

26. (p. 372.) Governments are the judges of actions, and not of opinions. If I advance a groſs error, I am puniſhed by ridicule and contempt; but if in conſequence of an erroneous opinion I attempt to violate the liberty of other men, it is then I become criminal.

If, being a devout adorer of Venus, I burn the temple of Serapis, the magiſtrate ought to puniſh me; not as a heretic, but as a diſturber of the public peace; as a man unjuſt, who being free in the exerciſe of my own worſhip, would deprive my fellow-citizens of the liberty I enjoy myſelf.

27. (p. 375.) The expulſion of the Jeſuits from Spain and Portugal ſhews the miniſters to have been of a bold and firm character. In France, the knowledge already diffuſed among the people facilitated that expulſion. If the pope had complained too bitterly, his plaints would have appeared ill-placed.

In a letter wrote on the ſubject of the condemnation of the mandate of M. Soiſſons, by the congregation of the holy office, a virtuous cardinal remonſtrated to the holy father, "that there "are certain pretenſions the court of Rome ought to bury in "eternal oblivion; eſpecially, he added, in theſe unhappy and "deplorable times, when the infidels and the impious make "the fidelity of the miniſters of religion ſuſpected."

Now what do the words *infidel* and *impious* mean in the eccleſiaſtical language? The oppoſers of the power of the clergy. It is therefore to the infidels kings owe their ſecurity, the people their tranquility, the parliaments their exiſtence, and the ambition of the ſacerdotal power its moderation. Theſe pretended impious ought to be the dearer to the French nation, as

there is nothing to fear from them. The philoſophers form no ſeparate body; they are without authority; beſide, it is impoſſible, as mere citizens, that they ſhould ever have any intereſt which is not connected with that of the public, under a diſcerning government.

28. (p. 376.) What means are there of forming virtuous citizens in Catholic countries? The inſtruction of youth is there confided to prieſts: now the intereſt of the prieſt is almoſt always contrary to that of the ſtate. Never will a prieſt adopt this fundamental principle of all virtue, which is, "that the "juſtice of our actions depends on their conformity with the "general intereſt." Such a principle oppoſes its ambition.

Beſide, if morality, like other ſciences, cannot be improved but by time and experience, it is evident that a religion which pretends, in conſequence of its being revealed, to inſtruct men in all their duties, muſt the more efficaciouſly oppoſe the improvement of that ſcience, as it leaves nothing to be done by genius and experience.

29. (p. 377.) At the time France was engaged in a war with England, the parliaments were making war on the Jeſuits, and the devout court took part with the latter; in conſequence every one there was buſied with eccleſiaſtical intrigues. One would have imagined it to be the end of the reign of Lews XIV. They then reckoned at Verſailles a few honeſt men, and a great number of bigots.

I ſhall be aſked, without doubt, why I regard bigotry as ſo fatal to ſtates? Spain, they will ſay, ſubſiſts, and Spain has not yet thrown off the yoke of the inquiſition. It is true; but that empire is weak; it does not excite any jealouſy; it makes no conqueſt; and it has no commerce. Spain lies in a ſeparate corner of Europe; it cannot in its preſent ſituation either attack or be attacked It is not the ſame with another ſtate. France, for example, is feared and envied: it is open on all ſides; its commerce maintains its power, and its genius maintains its commerce. There is but one way of ſupporting induſtry, which is to eſtabliſh a mild government, where the mind can preſerve its ſpring, and the citizen his liberty of thought. If the darkneſs of ignorance be again ſpread over France, its induſtry will diminiſh, and its power daily decline.

A ſuper-

A ſuperſtitious nation, like one ſubject to arbitrary power, is ſoon without morals, without ſpirit, and conſequently without force. Rome, Conſtantinople, and Liſbon are proofs of this. If all the people there give themſelves up to effeminacy and debauchery, it is not to be wondered at; for where men are forbid the uſe of the mind, they will naturally reſign themſelves to that of the body.

SECTION X.

Of the power of inſtruction: of the means of improving it to the utmoſt: of the obſtacles that oppoſe the progreſs of this ſcience.

Of the facility with which, theſe obſtacles removed, the plan of an excellent education might be laid down.

CHAP. I.

Education can do all.

THE ſtrongeſt proof of the power of education is the proportion conſtantly obſerved between the diverſity of inſtruction, and its different products or reſults. The Indian, indefatigable in hunting, is more ſwift in the chace than the poliſhed man *; becauſe he is more exerciſed in it.

* The ſagacity of the ſavages in diſtinguiſhing the track of a man through a foreſt is incredible: they can tell by it his country, and the form of his perſon. To what ſhall we refer the ſuperiority of the ſavage in this reſpect over the poliſhed man? To a multitude of experiments. Judgment of every kind is the child of obſervation.

The

The poliſhed man has more knowledge, he has more ideas than the ſavage, becauſe he receives a greater number of different ſenſations, and is by his ſituation more intereſted to compare them with each other.

Therefore the ſuperior agility of the one, and various knowledge of the other, are the effects of the difference of their education.

If men be commonly frank, loyal, induſtrious, and humane, under a free government; and mean, falſe, and vile, without genius, and without courage, under a deſpotic government, the difference in their characters is the effect of the different education received under thoſe different governments.

From the ſeveral conſtitutions of ſtates let us paſs to the different conditions of men. If we aſk what is the cauſe that ſo little juſt judgment is to be found among theologians? The duplicity common to them in general reſults from their education; they are in this reſpect more aſſiduouſly inſtructed than other men; being accuſtomed from their youth to content themſelves with the jargon of the ſchools, and to take words for things, it becomes impoſſible for them to diſtinguiſh truth from falſhood, or ſophiſm from demonſtration.

Why are the miniſters of the altar the moſt dreaded of all men? Why does the Spaniſh proverb ſay, "take heed of the head of a bull, of a "woman before, of a mule behind, and of a monk

"on

" on all ſides ?" Proverbs being almoſt all founded on experience, are almoſt always true. To what then attribute the wickedneſs of the monk ? To his education.

The ſphinx, the Egyptians ſaid, was the emblem of a prieſt. The face of a prieſt is gentle, modeſt, inſinuating ; and the ſphinx has that of a girl. The wings declare it to be an inhabitant of heaven ; its claws announce the power that ſupeſtition gives it upon earth ; and its ſerpent's tail is a ſign of its ſupple nature. Like the ſphinx, the prieſt propoſes enigmas, and throws into priſon all who do not interpret them to its liking. The monk, accuſtomed from early youth to the practice of hypocriſy in his conduct and opinions, is in fact the more dangerous, as he has acquired a greater habit of diſſimulation.

If a ſon of the church be the moſt arrogant of all the children of men, it is becauſe he is continually puffed up by the homage of a great number of ſuperſtitious perſons.

If a biſhop be the moſt cruel of all men, it proceeds from his not being, like moſt men, expoſed to danger and want ; from an effeminate education that contracts his character ; and from his being perfidious and cowardly ; for there is nothing more cruel, ſays Montaigne, than weakneſs and cowardice. The ſoldier is commonly in his youth ignorant and licentious. Why ? Becauſe he has no need of inſtruction. In his later years he

is

is frequently a ſot and a fanatic. Why? Becauſe the days of debauchery being then paſt, his ignorance ought to make him ſuperſtitious.

There are few great talents among the polite world, which is the effect of their education; that of their childhood is too much neglected; falſe and puerile ideas alone are then engraved on their memories. To furniſh them afterward with ſuch as are juſt and great, the former muſt be effaced: now this is always a work of time, and the boy becomes old before he is a man.

In almoſt all profeſſions the inſtructive life is very ſhort; the only way to prolong it is to form the judgment early. Let the memory be charged with no ideas that are not clear and determinate; adoleſcence will then become more intelligent than is now old age.

Education makes us what we are. If the Savoyard, from the age of ſix or ſeven years, be frugal, active, laborious, and faithful, it is becauſe he is poor and hungry, and becauſe he lives, as I have juſt ſaid, with thoſe that are endowed with the qualities required in him; in ſhort, it is becauſe he has for inſtructors example and want, two imperious maſters whom all obey *.

* When we contract in infancy habits of labour, œconomy, and fidelity, it is with difficulty we depart from them; it is not without a long intercourſe with knaves, or paſſions extremely ſtrong; and ſuch paſſions are rare.

The

The uniform conduct of the Savoyards results from the resemblance of their situation, and consequently the uniformity of their education. It is the same with that of princes. Why are they reproached with having nearly the same education? Because they have no interest to instruct themselves, having only to will, and obtain their real and imaginary wants. Now he who can without talents and without labour satisfy both of these, is without motive to information and activity.

Understanding and talents being never any thing more in men than the produce of their desires and particular situation *, the science of edu-

* It is to misfortue, to the severity of their education, that Europe owes such princes as Henry IV. Elizabeth, prince Henry, the princes of Brunswick, and, lastly, Frederic. It is in the cradle of calamity that great princes are nourished: their knowledge is commonly in proportion to the dangers they have experienced. If an usurper have almost always great talents, it is because his situation obliges him to have them. It is not so with his descendants: born on the throne, if they be almost always without genius, and think little, it is because they have little occasion to think. The love of arbitrary power in a sultan is the effect of idleness: he would free himself from the study of the laws; he wants to avoid the fatigue of attention; and that want does not influence the visir less than the sovereign. The influence of idleness on the several governments is unknown. Perhaps I was the first that discovered the constant proportion there is between the knowledge of the people, the force of their passions, and the form of their government; and consequently the interest they have to acquire knowledge.

The savage or man of nature, solely employed in providing for his corporeal wants, is less intelligent than the polished man; and among such savages, the most discerning are those who find the most difficulty in gratifying the same wants.

In

cation may be reduced perhaps to the placing a man in that ſituation which will force him to attain the talents and virtues required in him.

Sovereigns are not in this reſpect always the moſt happily placed. Great kings are extraordinary phenomena in nature. Theſe phenomena are long hoped for, and ſeldom appear. It is always from the prince that is to ſucceed we expect the reformation of abuſes; he is to perform miracles. That prince mounts the throne; nothing is changed; the adminiſtration remains the ſame. Why, in fact, ſhould we expect that a monarch, frequently worſe educated than his anceſtors, ſhould be more wiſe?

The ſame cauſes will always produce the ſame effects.

In Africa, which of all the people are the moſt ſtupid? They that inhabit foreſts of palm-trees, whoſe trunks, leaves, and fruit furniſh, without culture, all the wants of man. Happineſs itſelf can ſometimes ſtupify the ſpirit of a nation. England now produces few excellent works in morality and politics; its deficiency in this reſpect is perhaps the effect of its public felicity. Perhaps celebrated writers owe, in certain countries, the melancholy advantage of an extraordinary diſcernment, merely to the degree of misfortune and oppreſſion under which their fellow-ſubjects groan.

Sufferings, when carried to a certain point, enlighten mankind; when carried beyond, render them ſtupid. Will France remain for a long time intelligent?

CHAP. II.

On the education of princes.

"A King born on the throne is rarely worthy of it," ſaid a French poet. Princes in general owe their genius to the auſterity of their education, to the dangers that ſurround their infancy, and the misfortunes they have felt. The more ſevere the education, the more wholeſome it is to thoſe who are one day to command over others.

It is in times of trouble and diſcord that ſovereigns receive this ſort of education; at other times they have nothing more given them than a ceremonial inſtruction, as bad, and often as difficult to change, as the form of government of which it is the effect *.

What can be expected from ſuch inſtruction?

What is in Turky the education of the heir to the throne? The young prince, confined to a part of the ſeraglio, has for his company and amuſement a woman and a tapeſtry-loom: if he

* In every deſpotic government where the manners are corrupted, that is, where private intereſt is detached from that of the public, the bad education of princes is the neceſſary effect of the bad form of government. All the Eaſt is a proof of this.

go

go out of his retreat, it is once a week under a ſtrong guard to viſit the ſultan, and return under the ſame guard to his apartment, where he finds the ſame woman and the ſame tapeſtry-loom. Now what idea can he acquire, in this retreat, of the ſcience of government? This prince mounts the throne; the firſt object they preſent him is a map of his vaſt empire; and what they recommend to him is to be the love of his ſubjects and the terror of his enemies. But what is he to do to be the one and the other? He does not know. A want of the habit of application renders him incapable. The ſcience of government becomes odious to him; he is diſguſted with it; ſhuts himſelf up in his haram, and there changes his women and his viſir; impales ſome, baſtinadoes others, and thinks he governs. Princes are men, and as men they can produce no fruits but what ſpring from inſtruction.

In Turky neither ſultan nor ſubject think. It is the ſame in the ſeveral courts of Europe, in proportion as the education of their princes approach that of the Eaſt.

The reſult of this chapter is, that the virtue and vices of men are always the effects of their different ſituations, and the different inſtruction they receive.

This principle admitted, ſuppoſe we would determine the beſt plan of education for every condition, what is to be done? Determine

1. What

1. What are the talents and virtues eſſential to a man of ſuch a profeſſion.

2. Point out the means of compelling him to acquire (1) thoſe talents and virtues.

Men in general reflect the ideas of thoſe that ſurround them; and the only virtues we can be ſure to make them acquire, are the virtues of neceſſity. Convinced of this truth, if I would inſpire my ſon with the ſocial qualities, I would give him companions of nearly his own ſtrength and age; I would in this reſpect abandon the care of their mutual education, and not have them inſpected by a maſter, but to moderate the rigor of their corrections. According to this plan of education, I ſhould be ſure that if my ſon was foppiſh, impertinent, conceited, or imperious, he would not remain ſo long.

A child cannot long ſuſtain the contempt, inſults, and railleries of his comrades: there is no ſocial defect that ſuch treatment will not correct. To be ſtill more ſure of ſucceſs, it is neceſſary that he be almoſt always abſent from the paternal dwelling; and that he do not return in the vacations and holidays, to catch again, from a converſation with the people of the world, the vices his fellow-pupils had effaced.

In general, that education is the beſt where the child, moſt diſtant from his parents, has leaſt opportunity of mixing incoherent ideas with thoſe he ought to acquire in the courſe of his ſtudies (2).

It

It is for this reaſon that a public education will always excel a private.

There are too many people however of a different opinion, to permit me to paſs this matter over without a further explication.

CHAP. III.

Of the advantages of a public over a domeſtic education.

THE firſt of theſe advantages is the ſalubrity of the place where youth receive their inſtructions.

In a domeſtic education the child lives in the paternal houſe; and that houſe, in great cities, is frequently ſmall and unwholſome.

In public education the houſe, on the contrary, is in the country, and may be ſo ſpacious as to admit of all the exerciſes proper to fortify the body, and preſerve the health of the youth.

The ſecond advantage is the rigour of the diſcipline. In the paternal houſe diſcipline is never ſo exactly obſerved as in a public education. In a college all is ſubject to the hour: the clock there regulates both maſters and domeſtics: it determines the duration of meals, ſtudy, and recreation: the bell conſtantly preſerves order; and without

order there can be no regular ſtudies: order lengthens the days; diſorder contracts them.

The third advantage of public inſtruction is the emulation it inſpires. The principal incentives of early youth are fear and emulation. Now emulation is produced by comparing ourſelves with a great number of others. Of all the means of exciting a love of talents and virtue, this is the moſt certain; but a child in the paternal houſe has no opportunity of making theſe compariſons, and his inſtruction is ſo much the more imperfect.

The fourth advantage is the diſcernment of the inſtructors. Among men, and conſequently among fathers, there are diſcerning and ſtupid: the latter know not what inſtruction to give their children; the former know what learning they ſhould have, but are ignorant of the manner of making them eaſily conceive the ideas. This is a practical knowledge, ſoon acquired in a college, either by experience or tradition, but is frequently unknown to the moſt intelligent parents.

The fifth advantage of a public education is firmneſs. A domeſtic education is ſeldom reſolute. Parents, ſolely concerned for the corporeal advantages of their children, and fearful of making them uneaſy, indulge all their humours, and give to a mean compliance the name of parental affection*.

* There is no mother who does not pretend to have a violent love for her ſon: but if by the word *love* is meant a deſire to promote

Such are the ſeveral reaſons that will always make a public education preferable to a private. It is from the firſt alone that patriots are to be expected. That alone can ſtrongly connect in the mind of the people the ideas of private and public happineſs. I ſhall expatiate no further on this ſubject.

I have ſhewn all the power of education.

I have proved that in this matter the effects are always in proportion to the cauſes.

I have ſhewn how much a public education is preferable to a private.

I ſhould here enumerate the almoſt inſurmountable obſtacles that in moſt governments oppoſe the advancement of this ſcience, and the facility with which, thoſe obſtacles being removed, education might be carried to the higheſt degree of improvement.

promote his happineſs, and conſequently his inſtruction, there are ſcarce any of them that may not be accuſed of indifference. What mother, in fact, ſtudies the education of her children, reads the beſt books on the ſubject, and endeavours to underſtand then? Do they act in the ſame manner when they have an important cauſe to manage? No: there is no woman who does not then conſult her lawyer, and conſider his opinion. She that ſhould do neither the one nor the other, would be regarded as indifferent to the ſucceſs of her cauſe. The degree of attention paid to any affair, is the meaſure of the degree of ſolicitude we have for is ſucceſs. Now if this rule be applied to the care commonly taken in the education of children, nothing will be found more rare than maternal love.

But before enumerating theſe particulars, I think I ſhould point out to the reader the ſeveral parts of inſtruction to which the legiſlature ſhould pay a particular attention. For this purpoſe I ſhall diſtinguiſh education into two ſorts, the one corporeal, the other intellectual.

CHAP. IV.

A general idea of corporeal education.

THE object of this education is to render men robuſt and healthful, conſequently more happy, and generally uſeful to their country, that is, moſt proper for the ſeveral employments to which the national intereſt may call them.

The Greeks, convinced of the importance of corporeal education, honoured gymnaſtic exerciſes (3), and made it part of the inſtruction of their youth: they employed it in their medicinal regulations, not only as a preſervative, but as a ſpecific, to fortify this or that member, weakened by diſeaſe or accident.

Perhaps it will be expected that I ſhould here deſcribe the games and exerciſes of the ancient Greeks; but what can I ſay on this ſubject that is not to be found in the memoirs of the Academy of

of Inſcriptions, where may be ſeen even the manner in which Lacedæmonian nurſes began the education of the Spartan children?

But was the ſcience of gymnaſtics carried by the Greeks to the higheſt degree of perfection? I know not.

After the eſtabliſhment of theſe exerciſes, it is to be determined by an able ſurgeon and phyſician only, informed by daily experience, of what degree of improvement this ſcience is ſtill ſuſceptible. I ſhall only obſerve on this ſubject, that corporeal education is neglected by almoſt all European nations: not that governments directly oppoſe improvements in this part of education; but that exerciſes of this ſort being no longer in vogue, are no longer encouraged.

There is no law that forbids the laying out of a ſuitable ground in a college, where the ſtudents of a proper age may exerciſe themſelves in wreſtling, running, leaping, ſwimming, throwing or lifting of weights, &c. If in this ground, conſtructed in imitation of the gymnaſium of the Greeks, prizes were to be decreed for the conquerors, there is no doubt but they would rekindle in youth the natural diſpoſition they have for ſuch games. But may not the minds and the bodies of young people be both exerciſed at the ſame time? Why not? Let them ſuppreſs in colleges thoſe vacations during which children return to their parents to weary themſelves with idleneſs,

and neglect their ſtudies; and let their daily recreations be enlarged. A child may conſecrate every day ſeven or eight hours to his ſerious ſtudies, and four or five to exerciſes more or leſs violent; and thus he will at once invigorate both body and mind.

The plan of ſuch an education is no maſterpiece of invention. Nothing more is neceſſary to the carrying it into execution than to rouſe the attention of parents to this buſineſs. A good law would produce this effect *. Thus much may

* A vigorous education ſhould be given to youth; but can a plan of this ſort take place in an age of luxury, when men are drunk with pleaſure, and the government is become effeminate?

Effeminacy degrades a nation. But what is the degeneracy of their nation to the greateſt part of the men in power? They are only ſolicitous that a favourite ſon be not expoſed to the danger of a blow or a cold. There are perhaps fathers who, from a diſcerning and virtuous tenderneſs, deſire that their children ſhould be healthy and robuſt, and that they ſhould be rendered ſuch by vigorous exerciſe. But if theſe exerciſes be no longer in vogue, where is the father hardy enough to brave the ridicule of an innovation; and if he do, what means are there to reſiſt the cries and importunities of a weak and puſilanimous mother? Peace at home is to be purchaſed at any price. To change the manners of a people in this reſpect, the legiſlature muſt puniſh in parents a too effeminate education of their children, by ſhame and infamy; and not grant, as I have already ſaid, any military employ to thoſe who have not given proofs of a due ſtrength, and a proper temperament of body.

Parents would then be intereſted in forming robuſt and healthful children: but it is only from ſuch a law that we can expect ſuch a happy change in corporeal education.

ſuffice

ſuffice for the corporeal part of education. I ſhall now paſs to the moral part, which is without doubt the leaſt underſtood.

CHAP. V.

Of the time and the ſituation in which man is ſuſceptible of a moral education.

MAN, as an animal, feels different corporeal wants; theſe ſeveral wants are ſo many tutelar genii, created by nature to preſerve his body, and enlighten his mind. It is from heat, cold, hunger, and thirſt that he learns to bend the bow, to aim the arrow, to ſpread the net, to cover himſelf with a ſkin, to conſtruct a hut, &c. As long as individuals live ſeparate in foreſts they can have no moral education. The virtues of the poliſhed man are the love of juſtice and his country; thoſe of the ſavage are force and activity: his wants are his only inſtructors, the ſole preſervers of his ſpecies, and that preſervation ſeems to be the only intention of nature.

When men become multiplied and united in ſociety; when the want of proviſions obliges them to cultivate the earth, they make conventions among themſelves, and the ſtudy of theſe conventions gives birth to the ſcience of education. Its object is to inſpire men with a love of the laws

and of the ſocial virtues. The more perfect the education, the more happy the people. From whence I obſerve, that the progreſs of this ſcience, like that of legiſlation, is always in proportion to the progreſs of human reaſon, improved by experience; which experience always ſuppoſes the union of men in ſociety: we may then conſider them from two points of view.

1. As citizens.

2. As citizens of this or that profeſſion.

In theſe two ſituations they receive two ſorts of inſtruction; the moſt perfect is the latter. I have but little to ſay on this head, and it is for that reaſon I make it the firſt object of my examination.

CHAP. VI.

Of education relative to different profeſſions.

WHEN a youth is to be inſtructed in any art or ſcience, the ſame means preſent themſelves to all minds. I would make my ſon a Tartini*; I inſtruct him in the principles of muſic; I endeavour to make him feel it: in his moſt early youth I put a violin in his hands; this is what is commonly done, and it is nearly all that can be done.

* A celebrated player on the violin in Italy.

The

The progreſs of the child, more or leſs rapid, afterward depends on the ability of the maſter, his method of teaching, more or leſs improved; and laſtly, the greater or leſs taſte the ſcholar has for the inſtrument.

In like manner, when a rope dancer would teach his ſons his own trade, if from their moſt tender years he endeavour to give their bodies by exerciſe the utmoſt flexibility, he inſtructs them in the beſt manner poſſible. When a more difficult art is to be acquired, if for example we would form a painter; from the moment a youth is able to hold a pencil, he is taught to draw after the moſt correct prints, then after baſs-reliefs, and laſtly, after the moſt beautiful models. His memory is moreover enriched with the grand and ſublime images that are to be found in the poems of Virgil, Homer, Milton, &c. The pictures of Raphael, Guido, and Corregio are placed before his eyes, and he is made to remark their ſeveral beauties; he ſucceſſively ſtudies in thoſe paintings the magic of deſign, compoſition, colouring, &c. laſtly, his emulation is rouſed by a recital of the honours paid to celebrated painters.

This is all that an excellent education can do for a young painter: it is to the greater or leſs deſire he has to render himſelf illuſtrious that he muſt owe his future progreſs. Now chance has a great influence over the force of his deſire: a commendation given to a pupil at the moment he made a

maſterly ſtroke with his pencil, has ſometimes been ſufficient to animate him with a love of glory, and endow him with that determined attention which produces great talents.

But, it will be ſaid, there is no man who is inſenſible to corporeal pleaſure: all therefore muſt love glory, at leaſt in a country where that glory is the repreſentative of ſome real pleaſure. It is true; but the greater or leſs force of that paſſion always depends on certain circumſtances and ſituations; in ſhort, on that ſame chance which preſides, as I have proved in the ſecond ſection, over all our diſcoveries. Chance therefore has always a ſhare in the formation of illuſtrious men.

All that an excellent education can do, is to multiply the number of men of genius in a nation; it is to inoculate, if I may ſo ſay, good ſenſe on the reſt of the people: this it can do, and this is enough. This inoculation is full as valuable as any other.

The reſult of what I have here ſaid is, that the part of inſtruction peculiarly applicable to different conditions and profeſſions is in general ſufficiently good. It is only neceſſary on one hand to ſimplify the methods taught, (which is the buſineſs of the maſter), and on the other to increaſe the ſpring of emulation, (and that is the buſineſs of government).

With regard to the moral part of education, it is doubtleſs the moſt important, and the moſt neglected.

glected. There are no public ſchools in which the ſcience of morality is taught.

What do they learn at college from the third form up to rhetoric? To make Latin verſes. What time do they allot for the ſtudy of what they call ethics or morality? Scarce a month. Can we then wonder to find ſo few men that are virtuous, and inſtructed in their duties toward ſociety *?

To conclude; ſuppoſe that in a ſchool for public inſtruction they propoſe to give the pupils a courſe of morality, what is to be done for this purpoſe? Let the maxims of this ſcience, always fixed and determined, be derived from a ſimple principle, and from which may be deduced, as in geometry, an infinity of ſecondary principles. But this principle is not yet known; morality therefore is not yet a ſcience; for they cannot honour with that name a heap of incoherent and contradictory principles †. Now if morality be not a ſcience, what method is there of teaching it?

* Why do they not, by giving a new form to the civil government of Mr. Locke, explain to young people that book, which contains a part of the ſound principles of morality?

† The Sorbonne, as well as the church, pretends to be infallible and immutable. By what do we diſcover its infallibility and immutability? By its conſtancy in oppoſing every new idea. In other reſpects the Sorbonne is always contradicting its own deciſions. It firſt protected Ariſtotle againſt Deſcartes, and excommunicated the Carteſians; then taught their ſyſtem, and gave to that ſame Deſcartes the authority of a father of the church,

If I may be ſuppoſed to have at leaſt diſcovered the fundamental principle of morality, it ſhould be remembered that the intereſt of the prieſt will for ever oppoſe its publication; and that in every country we may always ſay, "No prieſt, or no true morality."

In Italy and Portugal it is not either religion or ſuperſtition they want.

CHAP. VII.

Of the moral education of man.

THERE are few good patriots; few citizens that are always juſt: Why? Becauſe men are not educated to be juſt; becauſe the preſent morality, as I have juſt ſaid, is nothing more than a jumble of groſs errors and contradictions; becauſe to be, a juſt man muſt have diſcernment, and they obſcure in children the moſt obvious conception of the natural law.

But are children capable of conceiving adequate ideas of juſtice? This I know, that if by the aid of a religious catechiſm we can engrave on the me-

church, and adopted his errors to oppoſe truths the moſt clearly demonſtrated. Now to what ſhall we attribute ſo much inconſtancy in the opinions of Sorbonniſts? To their ignorance of the true principles of all ſcience. Nothing would be more curious than a collection of their contradictions in the ſucceſſive condemnations they have iſſued againſt the theſis of the abbé Prades, the works of Rouſſeau, Marmontel, &c.

mory

mory of a child articles of faith that are frequently the moſt abſurd, we might conſequently, by the aid of a moral catechiſm, there engrave the precepts of an equity, which daily experience would prove to be at once uſeful and true.

From the moment we can diſtinguiſh pleaſure from pain; from the moment we have done and received an injury, we have acquired ſome notion of juſtice.

To form the moſt clear and preciſe ideas of juſtice, what is to be done? Aſk ourſelves.

Q. What is man?

A. An animal, ſaid to be rational, but certainly ſenſible, weak, and formed to propagate his ſpecies.

Q. What ſhould man do as an animal of ſenſebility?

A. Fly from pain, and purſue pleaſure. It is to this conſtant flight and purſuit that is given the name of ſelf-love*.

Q. What ſhould he alſo do as a weak animal?

A. Unite with other men, that he may defend himſelf againſt animals ſtronger than himſelf; or that he may ſecure a ſubſiſtence the beaſts would

* He that would underſtand the true principles of morality ſhould, with me, recur to the principle of corporeal ſenſibility, and ſearch in the wants of hunger, thirſt, &c. the cauſe that compels men, already multiplied, to cultivate the earth, to unite in ſociety, and to form conventions among themſelves, whoſe obſervation or infraction makes men juſt or unjuſt.

diſpute

diſpute with him; or laſtly, that he may ſurpriſe ſuch of them as are to ſerve him for nouriſhment: from hence all the conventions relative to the chaſe and fiſheries.

Q. What happens to man as being an animal formed to propagate his ſpecies?

A. That the means of ſubſiſtence diminiſh in proportion as the ſpecies is multiplied.

Q. What muſt he do in conſequence?

A. When the lakes and the foreſts are exhauſted of fiſh and game, he muſt ſeek new means of procuring ſubſiſtence.

Q. What are thoſe means?

A. They are reduced to two. When the inhabitants are not yet very numerous, they breed cattle, and become paſtors; but when they are vaſtly multiplied, and are obliged to find ſubſiſtence within a ſmall compaſs, they muſt then cultivate the land, and become agricultors.

Q. What does an improved cultivation of the land imply?

A. That men are already united in ſocieties or villages, and have made compacts among themſelves.

Q. What is the object of theſe compacts?

A. To ſecure the ox to his feeder, and the harveſt to him that tills the land.

Q. What determines man to theſe compacts?

A. His

A. His intereſt and foreſight. If there were another who could take the harveſt from him who has ploughed the land and ſowed the ſeed, no man would plough or ſow; and the next year the village would be expoſed to the horrors of a famine.

Q. What follows from the neceſſity of cultivation?

A. The neceſſity of property.

Q. How far do the compacts concerning property extend?

A. To my perſon, my thoughts, my life, my liberty, and my property.

Q. What follows from the compacts of property being once eſtabliſhed?

A. Pains or puniſhments to be inflicted on thoſe that violate them, that is, on the thief, the murderer, the fanatic, and the tyrant: aboliſh theſe puniſhments, and all compacts between men become void. From the moment any one can with impunity uſurp the property of another, mankind return to the ſtate of war; all ſociety is diſſolved, and men muſt fly from each other like lions and tygers.

Q. Are there puniſhments eſtabliſhed in poliſhed countries againſt the violaters of the law of property?

A. Yes; at leaſt in all thoſe where goods are not in common (4), that is, in almoſt all countries.

Q. What

Q. What renders this right of property ſo ſacred, and for what reaſon have they almoſt every where made a god of it under the name of *Termes?*

A. Becauſe the preſervation of property is the moral divinity of empires; as it there maintains domeſtic peace, and makes equity flouriſh; becauſe men aſſemble but to ſecure their properties; becauſe juſtice, which includes almoſt all virtues, conſiſts in rendering to every one his own, and conſequently may be reduced to the maintenance of the right of property; and becauſe, laſtly, the different laws have never been any thing more than the different means of ſecuring this right to the people.

Q. But ſhould not thought be included in the number of properties, and what is then meant by that word?

A. The right, for example, of rendering that worſhip to God I think the moſt agreeable to him. Whoever deprives me of this right violates my property; and, whatever be his rank, he is puniſhable for it.

Q. Is there any caſe in which a prince may oppoſe the eſtabliſhment of a new religion?

A. Yes, when it is intolerant.

Q. How is he then authorized?

A. By the public ſecurity: he knows that if ſuch religion becomes dominant, it will become perſecutive. Now the prince being charged with the

the happineſs of his people, ought to oppoſe the progreſs of ſuch religion.

Q. But why cite juſtice as the root of all virtues?

A. Becauſe from the moment that men, to ſecure their happineſs, aſſemble in ſociety, it is from juſtice that every one, by his good nature, humanity, and other virtues, contributes, as far as he can, to the felicity of that ſociety.

Q. Suppoſing the laws of nature to be dictated by equity, what means are there of making them to be obſerved, and of exciting in the minds of the people a love of their country?

A. Theſe means are the puniſhments inflicted for crimes, and the rewards aſſigned to virtues.

Q. What are the rewards for virtues?

A. Titles, honours, the public eſteem, and all thoſe pleaſures of which that eſteem is the repreſentative.

Q. What are the puniſhments for crimes?

A. Sometimes death; often diſgrace, accompanied with contempt.

Q. Is contempt a puniſhment?

A. Yes; at leaſt in a free and well governed country. In ſuch a country the puniſhment of contempt is ſevere and dreadful; it is capable of keeping the great to their duty: the fear of contempt renders them juſt, active, and laborious.

Q. Juſtice ought doubtleſs to rule empires; it ought to reign by the laws. But are laws all of the ſame nature?

A. No: ſome of them are, ſo to ſay, invariable, and without which, ſociety cannot ſubſiſt, or at leaſt happily ſubſiſt: ſuch are the fundamental laws of property.

Q. Is it ſometimes permiſſible to violate them?

A. No: except in extraordinary circumſtances, where the welfare of the country is concerned.

Q. By what right are they then violated?

A. By the general intereſt, which knows but one invariable law.

Salus populi ſuprema lex eſto.

Q. Ought all laws to give way to this?

A. Yes. If an army of Turks were marching to Vienna, the legiſlature, to famiſh them, might for a moment violate the right of property, deſtroy the harveſt of the people, and burn their granaries; if they be likely to fall into the hands of the enemy.

Q. Are the laws ſo ſacred that they can never be altered?

A. They ought to be altered when they are contrary to the happineſs of the majority.

Q. But is not every propoſal to alter them frequently regarded in a citizen as a criminal temerity?

A. It is: however, if man owe the truth to man; if a knowledge of the truth be at all times uſeful; if every

every one interested has a right to propose what he thinks will be of use to his associates; every citizen, for the same reason, has a right to propose to his nation what he thinks may contribute to the general felicity.

Q. There are however countries where the liberty of the press, and even that of thought, is proscribed?

A. Yes; because they imagine it more easy to rob the blind than the clear-sighted; and to dupe a people of ideots than of men of science. In every great nation there are always men interested in the misery of the public: they alone deny the citizens the right of informing their countrymen of the misfortunes to which one bad law will frequently expose them.

Q. Why are there not bad men of this sort in small and rising societies? Why are the laws there almost always wise and good?

A. Because the laws are there made by common consent, and consequently for the advantage of every one; and because the citizens not being numerous cannot form private associations against the general association, nor then detach their interest from that of the public.

Q. Why are the laws then so religiously observed?

A. Because no citizen is then more strong than the laws, and because his happiness is then con-

nected with their obſervation, and his miſery with their infraction.

Q. Among the various laws, are there not ſome that are called the laws of nature?

A. They are thoſe, as I have already ſaid, that concern property, and that we find eſtabliſhed among almoſt all nations and poliſhed ſocieties, becauſe ſocieties cannot be formed without the aid of ſuch laws.

Q. Are there ſtill other laws?

A. Yes; there are ſuch as are variable, and thoſe are of two ſorts: the one are variable by their nature; and ſuch are thoſe that regard commerce, military diſcipline, taxes, &c. Theſe may, and ought to change according to times and circumſtances. The other, immutable by their nature, are only variable from their not being yet carried to perfection. In the number of theſe I place the civil and criminal laws, thoſe that regard the adminiſttation of finances, the diſtribution of property, wills (5), marriages, &c. (6).

Q. Is the imperfection of theſe laws the mere effect of the idleneſs and indifference of legiſlatures?

A. Other cauſes concur with them, ſuch as fanaticiſm, ſuperſtition, and conqueſt.

Q. If the laws eſtabliſhed by one of theſe cauſes be favourable to knaves, what follows?

A. That they will be protected by thoſe knaves.

Q. Should

Q. Should not the virtuous, for a contrary reason, desire their abolition?

A. Yes; but the virtuous are few in number; and are not always the most powerful. Bad laws in consequence are not abolished, and seldom can be.

Q. Why?

A. Because genius is required to substitute good laws in the place of bad, and courage to make them received. Now in almost all countries the people in power have neither the necessary genius to form good laws, nor sufficient courage to establish them, and brave the clamours of ill designing men. If man love to govern other men, it is always with the least care and pains possible.

Q. Supposing a prince to have a desire to carry the science of the laws to perfection, what should he do?

A. Encourage men of genius to study this science, and charge them with resolving its several problems.

Q. What will then happen?

A. The variable laws, as yet imperfect, will cease to be so, and become invariable and sacred.

Q. Why sacred?

A. Because excellent laws being necessarily the work of experience and of sagacious judgment, are esteemed to be revealed from heaven itself; because the observation of those laws may be regarded as the worship most agreeable to the Divinity, and as

the only true religon; a religion that no power, not even God himſelf, can aboliſh; for to do evil is repugnant to his nature.

Q. Have not kings in this reſpect been ſometimes more powerful than the gods?

A. Among princes there are ſome, doubtleſs, who by violating the moſt ſacred laws of property, have made attempts on the poſſeſſions, the lives, and liberty of their ſubjects. They have received from heaven the power, but not the right to do hurt: this right has never been conferred on any one. Can we imagine that, like the infernal ſpirits, princes are condemned to torment their ſubjects? What a horrid idea of ſovereignty! Muſt the people be accuſtomed to ſee an enemy only in their monarch, and in his ſceptre an inſtrument of torture?

It is evident from this ſketch, to what a degree of perfection ſuch a catechiſm might carry the education of a citizen; how much it would enlighten the ſubject and the monarch in their reſpective duties, and laſtly, what juſt ideas it would give him of morality.

If the fundamental principle of the ſcience of morals be reduced to the ſimple fact of corporeal ſenſibility, that ſcience will become adapted to the capacity of men of all ages and all underſtandings: all may have the ſame idea of it.

From the moment we regard corporeal ſenſibility as the firſt principle of morality, its maxims

ceaſe

ceaſe to be contradictory; its axioms all linked together will bear the moſt rigorous demonſtration; in ſhort, its principles being freed from the darkneſs of ſpeculative philoſophy, will become evident, and the more generally adopted as the people will be the more clearly convinced of the intereſt they have to be virtuous (7).

Whoever ſhall elevate himſelf to this firſt principle, will ſee, if I may ſo ſay, with the firſt glance of his eye, all the imperfections of a legiſlation: he will ſee if the bulwark oppoſed by the laws to ſuch paſſions as are contrary to the public good, be ſufficiently ſtrong to ſupport their efforts: if the law rewards and puniſhes in ſuch juſt proportion as will neceſſitate men to virtue: laſtly, he will perceive in that ſo much vaunted axiom of the preſent morality,

"Do unto others as thou wouldſt they ſhould
"do unto thee,"

only a ſecondary, domeſtic maxim, and one that is always inſufficient to inform mankind of what they owe to their country. He will preſently ſubſtitute for it that axiom which declares,

"That the public good is the ſupreme law."

An axiom that includes, in a manner more general and more explicit, all that is uſeful in the former, and is applicable to all the different ſituations in which a citizen may find himſelf; that agrees

equally well with the private man, the judge, the minister, &c. It is, if I may so say, from the sublimity of such a principle, that descending even to the local conventions, which form the customary law of each people, every one may instruct himself in the particular nature of his engagements, in the wisdom or folly of the laws and customs of his country, and form a more just judgment of them, as he will have more habitually present to his mind the grand principles by which are estimated the wisdom, and even the equity of the laws.

We may therefore furnish youth with sound and determinate ideas of morality. By the aid of a catechism of probity we may carry this part of education to the highest degree of perfection: but what obstacles are there to surmount!

CHAP. VIII.

The interest of the priest, the first obstacle to the improvement of the moral education of man.

THE interest of the clergy, like that of every other body, changes according to time, place, and circumstance. Therefore every morality whose principles are fixed will never be adopted by the priesthood; they require one whose precepts being obscure and contradictory, are consequently variable, and may be adapted to all

all the ſeveral poſitions in which they may find themſelves.

The prieſt requires an arbitrary morality *, that allows him to legitimate to-day the action he will declare infamous to-morrow.

Unhappy is the nation that confides the education of the people to the prieſts! Only falſe ideas of juſtice can be expected from them, which are ſtill worſe than none. Whoever is without prejudice is the more ready to receive true knowledge, and the more ſuſceptible of juſt inſtructions. But where are ſuch inſtructions to be had? In the hiſtory of man, of nations, of their laws, and of the motives by which they were eſtabliſhed. Now it is not from ſuch ſources the clergy will permit the principles of juſtice to be drawn; their intereſt forbids: they are ſenſible that the people, when enlightened by that ſtudy, will meaſure the eſteem or contempt due to different actions by the ſcale of public utility: and what reſpect will they then have for bonzes, bramins, and their

* There are no evident propoſitions that the theologians do not render problematic. We have ſeen them, according to times and circumſtances, ſometimes maintain that it is the prince, and ſometimes the law, that ought to be obeyed; yet, neither reaſon, nor the intereſt of the monarch, leaves any doubt on this ſubject. Follow the law, ſaid Lewis XII. notwithſtanding the contrary orders that importunity may ſometimes force from the ſovereign.

The law ſhould be regarded as the determinate will of the prince; his orders, as the will of his miniſters and favourites.

pretended

pretended ſanctity? What has the public to do with their macerations, their hair-cloth, and blind obedience? The whole ſet of monachal virtues contribute nothing to the happineſs of a nation. It is not ſo with the virtues of a citizen, that is, with generoſity, veracity, juſtice, fidelity, friendſhip, ſincerity, and the engagements made with the ſociety to which we belong. Theſe virtues are really uſeful. There is no reſemblance between a ſaint and a virtuous citizen *.

Would the clergy, to be thought uſeful, pretend that it is to their prayers, and the effects of grace, that men owe their probity †? Experience proves that the probity of man is the effect of his education: that a people are what the ſagacity of their laws makes them: that modern Italy has more faith and leſs virtue than the ancient; and, to conclude, that it is always to the vice of adminiſtration we ought to refer the vices of individuals.

* A man may be religious under an arbitrary government, but not virtuous; for ſuch government, by detaching the intereſt of individuals from that of the public, ſtifles in man the love of his country: conſequently religion and virtue have nothing in common.

† If the number of prieſts be quadrupled in one country, and the number of patroles in another, which will be the leaſt infeſted with robbers? Not that ſtocked with prieſts. Ten thouſand a year in guards will conſequently reſtrain more thieves and villains than forty thouſand a year in prieſts. What a ſaving would this be to a nation! What a numerous expenſive band of robbers are a whole clergy to a nation!

When

When a government ceaſes to be œconomical, contracts debts, acts indiſcreetly, and, like the prodigal, begins by being a dupe, it ends by being a knave. When the great, by virtue of their power, think they may do whatever they will, are without juſtice, and without honour; under ſuch government the people will be without morals; they will regard force as all, and juſtice as nothing.

It is by the aid of a moral catechiſm, by recalling to the memories of men the motives of their uniting in ſociety, and their primitive, ſimple conventions, that we can give them clear ideas of equity: but the more explicit ſuch a catechiſm is, the more ſtrongly its publication will be oppoſed. Such a catechiſm would require for the inſtructors of youth, men ſkilful in the laws of nature and nations, and of the principal laws of each empire. Now ſuch men would ſoon transfer to the temporal power the veneration conceived for the ſpiritual. The prieſts therefore would forever oppoſe the publication of ſuch a work, and their criminal oppoſitions would ſtill find ſupporters. Sacerdotal ambition thinks all things lawful; it villifies, perſecutes, blinds mankind, and appears conſtantly juſt in the eyes of its partiſans.

If you reproach a monk with intolerance and cruelty, he will reply, that his ſituation requires them; that he follows his function. Are there then profeſſions in which men have a right to injure

jure the public? If there be, they ſhould be aboliſhed. Is not every man a citizen before he be a citizen of a particular profeſſion? If there be any one that can juſtify criminality, why did they puniſh Cartouche? He was the head of a band of robbers; he robbed, he followed his function.

The clergy therefore have the power, but not the right, to oppoſe the improvement of the moral part of education.

The prieſts already dread an approaching change in public inſtruction; but their fear is a pannick. How far are men ſtill from adopting a good plan of education! they will remain for a long time ſtupid. Let the Catholic church therefore reſt ſatisfied that in an age ſo ſuperſtitious, its miniſters will conſtantly preſerve ſufficient power efficaciouſly to oppoſe every uſeful reformation: neceſſity alone can triumph over their intrigues, and produce an alteration that is deſireable, but impracticable, without the concurrence, favour, and protection of governments.

CHAP. IX.

The imperfection of moſt governments, the ſecond obſtacle to the moral education of man.

THAT is a bad form of government where the intereſt of the citizens are diſcordant and oppoſite; where the laws do not oblige them

equally to concur in the public good. There are therefore few good governments. In thoſe that are bad, what are the actions to which they give the name of virtues? Is it to ſuch as are conformable to the intereſt of the majority? But ſuch actions are often declared criminal by the edicts of power and the manners of the age. Now what honeſt precepts in ſuch countries can be given the people, and what means are there to engrave them deeply in their memories? I have already ſaid that man receives two educations:

The one of childhood; which is given him by maſters.

The other of adoleſcence; which he receives from the form of government, and the manners of the nation in which he lives.

When the precepts of theſe two parts of education are contradictory, thoſe of the former become void.

If I inſpire my ſon from his infancy with a love of his country, and compel him to attach his happineſs to the practice of virtuous actions, that is, of actions uſeful to the majority; and if on entering the world he ſee patriots languiſh in contempt, miſery, and oppreſſion, and learn that virtuous men, hated by the rich and great, are rare in the city, and baniſhed from the court, that is, from the ſource of favours, honours, and riches, (which are undoubtedly real poſſeſſions), it is one hundred to one that my ſon will regard me as an abſurd dotard,

tard, a ſevere fanatic; that he will deſpiſe my underſtanding, and his contempt for me will be reflected on my maxims; and that he will give himſelf up to all thoſe vices that are favoured by the form of government, and the manners of his compatriots.

If, on the contrary, the precepts given in childhood are recollected in youth; and if a young man on entering the world ſee the maxims of his maſters honoured with the public approbation, then full of reſpect for thoſe maxims, they will become the rule of his conduct, and he will be virtuous.

But in an empire like that of Turky, let no one flatter himſelf with forming ſuch men. Always in dread, and expoſed to violence, is it in that ſtate of inquietude that a citizen can be the friend of virtue and his country? His wiſh is to repel force by force. If he would ſecure his happineſs, he muſt be ſtrong; it is of little ſignificance to be virtuous. But in an arbitrary government, who are the ſtrong? They that pleaſe the deſpot, and his ſub-deſpots. Then favour is a power: to obtain it, every thing is to be ſacrificed. Is it to be acquired by baſeneſs, falſhood, and injuſtice? A man becomes vile, a lyar, and a knave. The man that is frank and ſincere is miſplaced in ſuch a government, and would be impaled before the end of the year. In ſuch a country, every villain

who does not dread pain or death, may always juſtify the moſt infamous conduct.

Mutual wants, he will ſay, have forced men to unite in ſociety: if they have built cities, it is becauſe they have found more advantage in living together than ſeparate: the deſire of happineſs has therefore been the ſole principle of their union. Now the ſame motive, he will add, ought to force men to vice, when by the form of government, riches, honours, and happineſs, are its rewards.

However inſenſible men may be to riches and grandeur, they muſt, in every country where the law is too feeble efficaciouſly to protect the weak againſt the ſtrong, where they ſee none but oppreſſors and oppreſſed, convicts and executioners, deſire riches and honours, if not as means of performing acts of injuſtice, at leaſt as means of avoiding oppreſſion.

But there are arbitrary governments where they ſtill laviſh applauſe on the ſages and heroes of antiquity; where they boaſt of their diſintereſted conduct, their elevation and magnanimity of ſoul. Be it ſo: but thoſe virtues are now out of faſhion; the praiſe of magnanimous men is in the mouth of every one, and in the heart of no one. No man is in his conduct the dupe of ſuch eulogies.

I have ſeen the admirers of heroic times, that would have introduced the precepts of the ancients into their own countries: vain efforts! The forms of governments and religions forbid. There are

ages

ages when reformation in public inſtruction ſhould be preceded by ſome reformation in the adminiſtration of government and the public worſhip.

To what may the advice of a father to his ſon be reduced under a deſpotic government? To this ſhocking ſentence: "My ſon, be baſe and "groveling, without virtues, without vices, with-"out talents, and without character; be what the "court would have thee, and, every inſtant of thy "life, remember thou art a ſlave."

In ſuch a country it will not be to inſtructors courageouſly virtuous, that a father will confide the education of his children: he would ſoon repent it. Suppoſe that at the time of Xerxes a Lacedæmonian had been appointed preceptor to a Perſian lord, what would have been the conſequence? That, being brought up in the principles of patriotiſm and an auſtere frugality, the young man would have been odious to his compatriots, and, by a manly courageous probity, would have ruined his fortune. O thou Greek! too rigidly virtuous, the father would have cried, what haſt thou done to my ſon! thou haſt ruined him. I wiſhed him to have that mediocrity of underſtanding, thoſe ſoft and flexible virtues, to which in Perſia are given the names of wiſdom, prudent conduct, knowledge of the world, &c. Fine names, you will ſay, by which Perſia diſguiſes the vices that are authenticated by its government.

Be

Be it ſo; I would have my ſon rich and happy: his wealth or his indigence; his life or his death, depend on the prince. This thou knoweſt, and ſhouldſt have made him a ſkilful courtier; but thou haſt made him nought but a hero and a virtuous citizen.

Such would have been the language of the father; and what reply could be made? The prudent part of the people would have added: how abſurd, to give an honeſt and magnanimous education to a man deſtined by the form of government to be a vile courtier, an obſcure villain. To what purpoſe inſpire him with the love of virtue? Can he preſerve it in the midſt of corruption?

It follows therefore, that in every deſpotic form of government, and in every country where virtue is odious to men in power, it is equally inſignificant and ridiculous to attempt the formation of virtuous citizens.

CHAP. X.

Every important reformation in the moral part of education, ſuppoſes one in the laws and form of government.

WHEN a man propoſes to introduce a good plan of education in a vicious government, and flatters himſelf with making it accept-

able, he deceives himſelf: the author of ſuch a plan is too confined in his views to accompliſh any thing great. If the precepts of a new education contradict the morals of a government, they are always reputed bad. At what time will they be adopted? When the people feel great misfortunes, great oppreſſions, and a happy and ſingular concurrence makes the prince ſee the neceſſity of a reform. Till that is not felt men may, if they will, meditate the principles of a good education; its diſcovery muſt precede its eſtabliſhment: beſide, the more we cultivate a ſcience, the more new truths we diſcover relative to it, and the more ſimple its principles become. But let us not hope to ſee them adopted.

Some illuſtrious men have thrown great lights on this ſubject; education however is ſtill the ſame. Why? Becauſe a clear diſcernment is ſufficient to form a good plan of education, but power is required to eſtabliſh it. It is not therefore wonderful that the beſt plans of this kind have not hitherto produced any ſenſible alteration. But ought theſe works therefore to be regarded as uſeleſs? No: they have really advanced the ſcience of education. A mechanic invents a new machine; he calculates its effects, and proves its utility; the ſcience is thereby improved: the machine is not made; the public therefore receives no benefit from it; but it is diſcovered. There wants only

only a man of fortune to conſtruct it, and, ſooner or later, ſuch a man will be found.

Let an idea ſo flattering encourage philoſophers to ſtudy the ſcience of education. If there be a ſearch worthy of a virtuous citizen, it is that of truths which may be one day uſeful to mankind. What a conſolatory hope it is to our labours that we are promoting the happineſs of poſterity! The diſcoveries of philoſophers are in this reſpect ſo many ſeeds ſown in good minds, that only wait a favourable event to make them ſpring up; and ſooner or later that event will arrive.

The moral univerſe is, in the eyes of the undiſcerning, in a conſtant ſtate of repoſe and immobility; they think that all things have been, and will be, as they are; they ſee nothing in the paſt and future, but the preſent. It is not ſo with the intelligent: the moral world preſents to them a revolution perpetually variegated; the univerſe, continually in motion, appears to them forced to produce inceſſantly new forms, even to a total exhauſtion of all its combinations; till all that can be has been, and imaginary beings can no longer be conceived.

The philoſopher therefore perceives, at a greater or leſs diſtance, the time when power will adopt the plan of inſtruction preſented by wiſdom; and let him, animated by this hope, endeavour previouſly to undermine thoſe prejudices that oppoſe the execution of his plan.

If we would erect a magnificent monument, we ſhould, before we lay its foundation, choſe the ground, pull down the ruins with which it is incumbered, and clear away the rubbiſh. Such is the buſineſs of the philoſopher; let him not be accuſed of conſtructing no new edifice *; it is he that now ſubſtitutes a morality that is clear, ſound, and deduced from the very wants of man, for one that is obſcure, monachal, and fanatic, the ſcourge of the preſent and of paſt ages: it is to the philoſophers, in fact, that mankind will owe this firſt and ſole principle of morality; *the public good is the ſupreme law.*

There are certainly few governments that conduct themſelves by this law; but to impute this fault to the philoſophers is to make a crime of their impotence. When the architect has given a complete plan of a palace, he has executed his

* It has been long ſaid of the philoſophers, that they deſtroy all and build nothing: they will no longer ſuffer this reproach. Should the modern Hercules moreover ſtrangle the monſtrous errors only, they will ſtill merit the approbation of mankind. The accuſation brought againſt them on this account ariſes merely from the inclination men in general have to believe, be it truth or falſhood. It is in early youth we are made to contract this inclination, which in time becomes a deſire that is continually greedy of gratification. When a philoſopher deſtroys one error, men are always ready to ſay to him, with what other will you replace it? They reſemble a ſick man, who ſays to his phyſician, Doctor, when you have cured me of my fever, what other diſorder will you give me in lieu of it?

employ:

employ: it is for the ſtate to purchaſe the ground, and provide the funds neceſſary for its conſtruction. I know that it is put off for a long time; that they prop up the old palace a long while before they erect a new one; and during that time the plans are uſeleſs; they lie dormant, but they will be at length brought forth.

The architect of the moral edifice is the philoſopher: the plan is drawn; but the greateſt part of religions and governments oppoſe its execution. When the obſtacles that a ſtupid religion or tyranny ſet to the progreſs of morality are removed, mankind may flatter themſelves with ſeeing the ſcience of education carried to the higheſt degree of perfection of which it is ſuſceptible.

Without entering into the detail of the plan of a good education, I have at leaſt pointed out the principal parts that are to be reformed; I have ſhewn the reciprocal dependance there is between the moral part of education and the different forms of government: and laſtly, I have proved that a reformation in one cannot be produced without a reformation in the other.

This truth being clearly demonſtrated, the attempt can no longer appear impoſſible: being aſſured that the excellence of education depends on the excellence of the laws, there is no longer any occaſion to attempt to reconcile irreconcileables.

If I have marked out the ſpot where the mine ſhould be dug, future men of letters, better in-

formed in their reſearches on this ſubject, will no longer wander in vain ſpeculation, and I ſhall ſpare them the fatigue of an uſeleſs labour.

CHAP. XI.

Of inſtruction, after the obſtacles that oppoſe its progreſs are removed.

WHEN honours and rewards are always decreed in a country to merit, when public and private intereſt are conſtantly united, the moral education in that country will be neceſſarily excellent, and the people neceſſarily virtuous.

Man (experience proves) is by nature an imitator, an ape; if he live in the midſt of honeſt citizens, he will become honeſt, when the precepts of his inſtructors are not contradicted by the national manners. When maxims and examples equally concur to excite in men the deſire of talents and virtue; when their fellow-citizens regard vice with horror, and ignorance with contempt, they will be neither fools nor knaves: the idea of happineſs being connected in our minds with that of merit, and the love of felicity will compel us to the love of virtue.

When I ſee honours heaped on thoſe who have rendered themſelves uſeful to their country; when I meet none but diſcerning citizens, and hear none but honeſt diſcourſes, I learn to be virtuous, if I may

may ſo ſay, as we learn our native language, without perceiving it.

In every country, if we except the powerful, the wicked are thoſe that the laws and inſtruction have made ſo (8).

I have ſhewn that the excellency of moral education depends on the excellency of government: I may ſay as much of corporeal education. Every wiſe government endeavours to make the people not only virtuous, but ſtrong and healthful. Such men are at once the moſt happy, and the moſt proper for the ſeveral employments to which the intereſt of the ſtate may appoint them. Every ſagacious government therefore will eſtabliſh gymnaſtic exerciſes.

With regard to the latter part of education, which conſiſts in making men illuſtrious in the arts and ſciences, it is evident that its perfection alſo depends on the ſagacity of the legiſlature. When the inſtructors of mankind are freed from a ſuperſtitious reverence for ancient cuſtoms, and the ſpring of their genius is allowed to exert its full force; when they are excited by the hope of rewards to improve the methods of inſtruction, and invigorate the deſire of emulation (9), it is impoſſible, when encouraged by ſuch hope, that intelligent maſters, who have acquired the habit of managing the minds of their pupils, ſhould not ſoon give to this part of education, already the moſt ad-

vanced, all the perfection of which it is ſuſceptible.

Good or bad education is almoſt entirely the work of the laws. But, they will ſay, how much knowledge is neceſſary to conſtruct ſuch as are good? Leſs than is imagined. It is ſufficient for this purpoſe that the miniſter have the intereſt and deſire to make ſuch laws. Suppoſe, however, the legiſlature ſhould want information, every virtuous and intelligent citizen would lend him aſſiſtance: good laws would then be made, and the obſtacles that oppoſe the progreſs of inſtruction would be removed.

But can things that are doubtleſs eaſy in weak and riſing ſocieties, whoſe intereſts are ſimple, be practicable in ſuch as are rich, powerful, and numerous? How can the unlimited deſire of man for power be there reſtrained? How can the projects of the ambitious, who are leagued to enſlave their fellow-citizens, be there prevented? and laſtly, how conſtantly and efficaciouſly oppoſe that coloſſal and deſpotic power, which, founded on the contempt of talents and virtues, makes the people languiſh in indolence, fear, and miſery?

In too extenſive empires there is perhaps but one method of executing, in a durable manner, the two-fold problem of an excellent legiſlation, and a perfect education; which is, as I have already ſaid, to divide thoſe empires into a certain number

of

of federative republics, which will be defended by their ſmallneſs againſt the ambition of their fellow-citizens, and by their confederation againſt the ambition of their neighbours.

I ſhall not extend this queſtion further. What I propoſed in this ſection was to give clear and ſimple ideas of corporeal and moral education; to determine the ſeveral ſorts of inſtruction that ſhould be given to men, to citizens, and to citizens of particular profeſſions; to deſignate the reformations that ſhould be made in governments, and the obſtacles that now oppoſe the ſcience of morality; and laſtly, to ſhow that theſe obſtacles removed, the problem of an excellent education will be almoſt entirely reſolved.

I ſhall finiſh this chapter with the following obſervation, which is, that to throw more light on ſo important a ſubject, it is neceſſary to be well acquainted with man.

To determine the extent of the faculties of his underſtanding.

To ſhew the ſprings by which he is moved, and the manner in which thoſe ſprings are put in action.

And laſtly, to hint to the legiſlature new means of improving the great work of the laws.

If on theſe different ſubjects I have publiſhed ſome new and uſeful truths, I have fulfilled my undertaking; and have a right to the eſteem and acknowledgment of mankind.

Among

Among the great number of queſtions treated of in this work, one of the moſt important was to determine whether genius, virtue, and talents, to which nations owe their grandeur and felicity, were the effect of the difference of nouriſhment and temperament; in ſhort, of the difference of the organs of the five ſenſes, over which the excellence of the laws and adminiſtration have no effect; or if the ſame genius, the ſame virtues, and the ſame talents were the effect of education, over which the laws and the form of government can do all.

If I have proved the truth of the latter aſſertion, it muſt be allowed that the happineſs of nations is in their own hands, and that it entirely depends on the greater or leſs intereſt they take in improving the ſcience of education.

To aſſiſt the reader's memory, I ſhall conclude this work by a recapitulation of the ſeveral principles on which I have founded my opinion; the reader will thereby the more readily eſtimate its probability.

RE-

RECAPITULATION.

AFTER having in the Introduction to this work ſaid a few words on its importance, and on the ignorance of mankind relative to the true principles of education, and laſtly, of the dryneſs of the ſubject, and the difficulty of treating it, I have examined,

SECTION I.

" Whether education, neceſſarily different in dif-
" ferent men, be not the cauſe of that inequality
" of underſtandings hitherto attributed to the un-
" equal perfection of their organs."

To this purpoſe I have inquired at what age the education of man begins, and who are his inſtructors.

I ſee that man is the pupil of every object which ſurrounds him, of all the poſitions in which chance has placed him, in ſhort, of every incident that happens to him.

That theſe objects, poſitions, and incidents are not exactly the ſame for any two perſons, and conſequently no two receive the ſame inſtructions.

That if it were poſſible for two men to have the ſame objects before their eyes, theſe objects not ſtriking

ſtriking them at the preciſe moment when their minds are in the ſame ſituation, will not, in conſequence, excite in them the ſame ideas: therefore the pretended uniformity of inſtruction received, either in the ſchools or in the paternal houſe, is one of thoſe ſuppoſitions whoſe impoſſibility is proved by facts, and by the influence that chance, independent of inſtructors, has, and always will have, on the education of childhood and youth.

Theſe matters ſettled, I conſider the extreme extent of the power of chance, and I examine,

Whether illuſtrious men do not frequently owe to it their taſte for a particular ſort of ſtudy, and conſequently their talents and their ſucceſs in that ſtudy.

If the ſcience of education can be perfected without reſtraining the bounds of the empire of chance.

If the contradictions at preſent perceived among all the precepts of education, do not extend the empire of chance.

If theſe contradictions, of which I have given ſome examples, ought not to be regarded as effects of the oppoſition that is found between the religious ſyſtem and that of the public proſperity.

If religions might not be rendered leſs deſtructive of the national felicity, and founded on principles more conformable to the general intereſt.

What thoſe principles are.

If

If they might not be eſtabliſhed by an intelligent prince.

If among the falſe religions there are not ſome whoſe worſhip has not been leſs oppoſite to the welfare of ſociety, and conſequently to the improvement of the ſcience of education.

If after theſe ſeveral examens, and on the ſuppoſition that all men have an equal aptitude to underſtanding, the mere difference in their education ought not to produce a difference in their ideas and their talents. From whence it follows, that the inequality in underſtanding cannot be regarded, in men commonly well organiſed, as a demonſtrative proof of their unequal aptitude to acquire it.

I have examined,

SECTION II.

"If all men, commonly well organiſed, have "not an equal aptitude to underſtanding?"

I agree in the firſt place, that as all our ideas come to us by the ſenſes, we ought to regard the mind or underſtanding either as the mere effect of the greater or leſs degree of perfection in the five ſenſes; or of an occult and indeterminable cauſe, to which has been vaguely given the name of organiſation.

To prove the falſity of this opinion, we muſt have recourſe to experience, form a clear idea of the word Mind or Underſtanding and diſtinguiſh

it

it from the ſoul. This diſtinction made, we muſt obſerve,

On what objects the mind acts.

How it acts.

If all its operations are not reducible to the obſerving of the reſemblances and differences, the agreements and diſagreements that different objects have among themſelves and with us; and if, in conſequence, all judgments formed on corporeal objects are not mere ſenſations.

If it be not the ſame with judgments formed on ideas to which are given the names of abſtract, collective, &c.

If in every caſe to judge and compare can be any thing elſe than *alternate inſpection*, that is to ſay, *ſenſation*.

If we can feel the impreſſion of objects without comparing them with each other.

If ſuch compariſon does not ſuppoſe an intereſt to compare them.

If that intereſt be not the ſole and unknown cauſe of all our ideas, our actions, our pains, our pleaſures, and, in ſhort, our ſociability.

From whence I obſerve, that as this intereſt, in its laſt analyſis, takes its ſource in corporeal ſenſibility; that this ſenſibility is conſequently the ſole principle of human ideas and actions.

That there is no rational motive for rejecting this opinion.

That

That this opinion, once demonſtrated and acknowledged for true, we muſt neceſſarily regard the inequality of underſtandings as the effect,

Either of the unequal extent of the memory;

Or of the greater or leſs perfection of the five ſenſes.

That in fact, it is neither the extent of the memory, nor the extreme fineneſs of the ſenſes, that produces, and ought to produce the extent of the underſtanding.

That with regard to the fineneſs of the ſenſes, men commonly well organiſed differ only in the degrees of their ſenſations.

That this ſmall difference does not change the relation of their ſenſations to each other, and conſequently has no influence over the underſtanding, which is not, and cannot be any thing elſe than a knowledge of the true relations objects have to each other.

The cauſe of the different opinions of men.

That this difference is the effect of the uncertain ſignification of words; ſuch as

Good,

Intereſt, and

Virtue.

That if words were preciſely defined, and their definitions ranged in a dictionary, all the propoſitions of morality, politics, and metaphyſics would become as ſuſceptible of demonſtration as the truths of geometry.

That

That from the moment the ſame ideas are annexed to the ſame words, all minds adopting the ſame principles, would draw from them the ſame concluſions.

That it is impoſſible, as all objects appear to all men to have the ſame relations, that by comparing objects with each other, men (either in the material world, as is proved by geometry, or in the intellectual world, which is proved by metaphyſics), ſhould not form the ſame concluſions.

That the truth of this propoſition is proved by the reſemblance of the tales of the fairies, philoſophic tales, and religious tales of all countries, and by the uniformity of impoſitions, employed every where by the miniſters of falſe religions, to preſerve and increaſe their authority over the people.

From all theſe facts it reſults, that as the greater or leſs fineneſs of the ſenſes does not at all change the proportion in which objects ſtrike us, all men, commonly well organiſed, have an equal aptitude to underſtanding.

To augment proofs of this important truth, I have added a demonſtration of it in the ſame ſection, by another ſeries of propoſitions. I have ſhewn that the moſt ſublime ideas, once ſimplified, are, by the conſent of all philoſophers, reducible to this clear propoſition, *that white is white, and black is black.*

That

That every truth of this kind is comprehenſible by all underſtandings; and that therefore there is not any one, how great and general ſoever it may be, which clearly repreſented, and diſengaged from the obſcurity of words, cannot be equally conceived by all men commonly well organiſed. Now to be equally able to comprehend the higheſt truths, is to have an equal aptitude to underſtanding. Such is the concluſion of the ſecond ſection.

SECTION III.

The object of this ſection is an inquiry concerning the cauſes to which the inequality of underſtandings is to be attributed.

Theſe cauſes are reducible to two.

The one is the unequal deſire that men have to knowledge.

The other, the diverſity of poſitions in which chance places them; a diverſity from which reſults that of their inſtruction, and their ideas. To ſhew that it is to theſe two cauſes only we ought to refer the difference and inequality of underſtandings, I have proved that moſt of our diſcoveries are the gifts of chance.

That theſe ſame gifts are not granted to all.

This diſtribution however is not ſo unequal as imagined.

That in this reſpect chance is leſs neglectful of us, than we are, if I may uſe the expreſſion, neglectful of chance.

That in fact all men commonly well organiſed have an equal power of underſtanding, but that power is dead in them, when not put in action by ſome paſſion, ſuch as the love of eſteem, glory, &c.

That men owe to ſuch paſſions only the attention proper to fecundate the ideas offered to them by chance.

That without paſſions their minds might be, ſo to ſay, regarded as perfect machines, whoſe movement is ſuſpended till the paſſions put them in action.

From whence I conclude, that the inequality of underſtandings in men is the produce of chance, and of the unequal vivacity of their paſſions; but whether thoſe paſſions are the effects of the ſtrength of temperament, is what I examine in the following ſection.

SECTION IV.

I there demonſtrate,

That men commonly well organiſed are ſuſceptible of the ſame degree of paſſion.

That their unequal force is always the effect of the difference of ſituations in which chance has placed them.

That

That the original character of each man, (as Paſcal obſerves), is nothing more than the produce of his firſt habits: that man is born without ideas, without paſſions, and without other wants than thoſe of hunger and thirſt, and conſequently without character: that he often changes it without any change in his organiſation: that thoſe changes, independent of the greater or leſs fineneſs of his ſenſes, operate according to the changes that happen in his ſituation and ideas.

That the diverſity of characters depends ſolely on the different manners in which the ſentiment of ſelf-love is modified in men.

That this ſentiment, the neceſſary effect of corporeal ſenſibility, is common to all, and produces in all the love of power.

That this deſire produces envy, the love of wealth, of glory, importance, juſtice, virtue, intolerance, in ſhort, all the factitious paſſions, whoſe ſeveral names mean nothing more than the different applications of the love of power.

This truth eſtabliſhed, I ſhew, by a ſhort genealogy of the paſſions, that if the love of power be nothing more than the mere effect of corporeal ſenſibility, and if all men commonly well organiſed are ſenſible, all are conſequently ſuſceptible of the ſort of paſſion proper to put in action the equal aptitude they have to underſtanding

But can theſe paſſions be excited to an equal degree in all? Of this we may be certain, that the

love of glory may be exalted in man to the ſame degree of force as the ſentiment of ſelf-love; that the force of this ſentiment is in all men more than ſufficient to give them the degree of attention which the diſcovery of the ſublimeſt truths requires; that the human underſtanding is conſequently ſuſceptible of perfectibility; and laſtly, that in men, commonly well organiſed, the inequality of talents can be nothing more than the effect of the difference of their education, in which difference I comprehend the ſituations in which chance has placed them.

SECTION V.

What I here propoſe is, to ſhew the errors and contradictions of thoſe who adopt on this queſtion principles different from mine, and refer the inequality of underſtandings to the unequal perfections in the organs of the ſenſes.

No one has wrote better on this ſubject than M. Rouſſeau; I therefore cite him for an example. I ſhew, that always contradicting himſelf, he ſometimes regards underſtanding and character as effects of the diverſity of temperaments, and ſometimes adopts the contrary opinion.

That it reſults from his contradictions on this ſubject,

That

That virtue, humanity, underſtanding, and talents are acquiſitions.

That goodneſs is not the portion of man in his cradle.

That the ſeeds of cruelty are in corporeal wants.

That humanity is conſequently in man always the produce of fear, or of education.

That M. Rouſſeau, after his firſt contradictions, falls inceſſantly into others; that he believes, by turns, education to be uſeful and unuſeful.

Of the happy uſe that might be made, in public inſtruction, of ſome of M. Rouſſeau's ideas.

That, according to this author, we muſt not ſuppoſe childhood and early youth to be without judgment.

That the pretended advantages of mature age over youth are imaginary.

Of the eulogies given by M. Rouſſeau to ignorance; the motives that induced him to become its apologiſt.

That learning has never contributed to the corruption of manners; that M. Rouſſeau himſelf does not believe it.

Of the cauſes of the decadence of empires; that among theſe cauſes the improvement of the arts and ſciences cannot be cited:

And that their cultivation retards the ruin of a deſpotic empire.

SECTION VI.

I here conſider the ſeveral evils produced by ignorance.

I prove that ignorance is not deſtructive of effeminacy.

That it does not ſecure the fidelity of the ſubject.

That it determines the moſt important queſtions without examination.

That of luxury given as an example.

I prove that this queſtion cannot be reſolved without comparing an infinity of objects with each other.

Without firſt annexing preciſe ideas to the word *luxury*, and then examining;

If luxury may not be uſeful and neceſſary, and if it always ſuppoſe intemperance in a nation.

Of the cauſe of luxury: if it may not be itſelf the effect of thoſe public calamities of which it is accuſed of being the author.

If, to know the true cauſe of luxury, we muſt not go back to the formation of ſocieties, and there trace the effects of the great increaſe of mankind.

Obſerve, if this increaſe does not produce among them a diviſion of intereſt, and this diviſion a too unequal diſtribution of the national wealth.

The

The effects produced by the two unequal partition of riches, and by their introduction into an empire.

The good and bad effects of riches.

The causes of the too great inequality of fortunes.

The means of opposing the too rapid accumulation of wealth in the same hands.

Of countries where money is not current.

What are in those countries the productive principles of virtue.

Of countries where money is current.

That money there becomes the common object of the desire of men, and the productive principle of their actions and their virtues.

Of the period when, like the sea, riches abandon certain countries.

Of the state in which a nation then is.

Of the stupefaction that takes place of the loss of riches.

Of the several principles of activity in nations.

Of money, considered as one of these principles.

Of the evils occasioned by the love of money.

If, in the present state of Europe, the judicious magistrate ought to desire a too hasty diminution of such principle of activity.

That it is not in luxury, but in its productive cause, that we ought to look for the destructive principle of empires.

If we can uſe too much caution in examining queſtions of this nature.

If in ſuch queſtions the precipitate judgments of ignorance do not frequently involve a nation in the greateſt misfortunes.

If in conſequence of what has been ſaid, we ought not to hate and deſpiſe the protectors of ignorance, and in general all thoſe who, by oppoſing the progreſs of the human mind, impede the improvement of legiſlation, and conſequently the public happineſs, entirely dependent on the goodneſs of the laws.

SECTION VII.

That it is the excellence of the laws, and not, as ſome pretend, the purity of religious worſhip, that can ſecure the happineſs and tranquility of nations.

Of the little influence religions have on the virtue and felicity of nations.

Of a religious ſpirit, deſtructive of the legiſlative ſpirit.

That a religion truly uſeful will force the people to become intelligent.

That men do not act conſequentially to their belief, but their perſonal advantage.

That more conſiſtency in their determinations would render the papiſtical religion more detrimental.

That

That ſpeculative principles in general have little influence on the conduct of men, who obey only the laws of their country and their intereſt.

That nothing better proves the prodigious power of legiſlation than the government of the Jeſuits.

That it has furniſhed that religious order with the means of making kings tremble, and of executing the moſt enormous enterprizes.

Of enormous enterprizes.

That theſe enterprizes may be equally inſpired by the paſſions of glory, ambition and fanaticiſm.

The means of diſtinguiſhing the ſort of paſſion that commands them.

Of the time when the intereſt of the Jeſuits urges them to great crimes.

What ſect in France can oppoſe their enterprizes.

That Janſeniſm alone is able to deſtroy the Jeſuits.

That without the Jeſuits we ſhould never have known all the power of legiſlation.

That, to carry it to perfection, it is neceſſary to have, like St. Bennet, a religious order; or, like Romulus or Penn, an empire or colony to found.

That in every other ſituation the legiſlative genius, conſtrained by manners and prejudices already eſtabliſhed, cannot ſoar ſufficiently high, nor dictate thoſe perfect laws whoſe eſtabliſhment would

would give to nations the greateſt happpineſs poſſible.

That to reſolve the problem of the public felicity, we muſt previouſly know what conſtitutes the happineſs of man.

SECTION VIII.

In what conſiſts the happineſs of individuals, and conſequently the happineſs of a nation, neceſſarily compoſed of the happineſs of all the individuals?

That to reſolve this political problem, we muſt examine if men can be equally happy in every condition, that is, fill up all the inſtants of their days in a manner equally agreeably.

Of the employment of time.

That this employment is nearly the ſame in all profeſſions.

That if empires are peopled with none but unfortunate perſons, it is the effect of the imperfection of the laws, and the too unequal partition of riches.

That the people may be made more eaſy, and this eaſe would moderate in them the exceſſive deſire of riches.

Of the ſeveral motives which at preſent juſtify that deſire.

That

That among theſe motives the moſt powerful is the fear of diſguſt or wearineſs.

That the malady of diſguſt is more common and cruel than is imagined.

Of the influence of diſguſt on the manners of a people and the form of their government.

Of religion and its ceremonies, conſidered as a remedy for diſguſt.

That the only remedies for this evil are lively and diſtinct ſenſations.

From hence our love for eloquence, poetry, and all the pleaſing arts, whoſe object is to excite ſenſations of that kind.

Particular proofs of this truth.

Of the arts of amenity; their impreſſion on the opulent idler; that they cannot free him from diſguſt.

That the moſt opulent are in general the moſt diſguſted, becauſe they are paſſive in almoſt all their pleaſures.

That the paſſive pleaſures are in general the moſt tranſient and moſt expenſive.

That conſequently it is the rich who feel moſt forcibly the want of riches.

That the rich man would be always moved without the trouble of moving himſelf.

That he is without motive to diveſt himſelf of an idleneſs, from which a moderate fortune neceſſarily frees other men.

Of

Of the aſſociation of the ideas of happineſs and riches in our minds; that this aſſociation is the effect of education.

That a different education may produce a contrary effect.

That then, without being equally rich and powerful, individuals may be, and think themſelves, equally happy.

Of the remote utility of theſe principles.

That once convinced of this truth, men ſhould no longer regard evil as inherent in the nature of ſociety, but as an accident occaſioned by the imperfection of their legiſlation.

SECTION IX.

Of the poſſibility of tracing out a good plan of legiſlation.

Of the obſtacles ignorance ſets to its publication.

Of the ridicule that is thrown on every new idea, and every profound ſtudy of morality and politics.

Of the hatred of ignorance for all reformation.

Of the difficulty of making good laws.

Of the firſt queſtions to be aſked on this ſubject.

Of rewards; that they never corrupt the manners, of whatever kind they be, though it were a luxury of pleaſure.

Of

Of the luxury of pleaſures: that every pleaſure, decreed as a public acknowledgment, cheriſhes virtue, and makes the laws reſpected, whoſe deſtruction never is, as ſome pretend, the effect of the inconſtancy of the human mind.

Of the true cauſes of the changes that happen in the laws of nations.

That theſe changes proceed from the imperfection of thoſe laws themſelves, and in the negligence of adminiſtrations, who know not how to reſtrain the ambition of neighbouring nations by the terror of their arms, nor that of their fellow-citizens by the ſagacity of their regulations; and who, beſide, being educated in detrimental prejudices, favour an ignorance of truths whoſe publication would ſecure the public felicity.

That the publication of the truth is never fatal but to him by whom it is publiſhed.

That a knowledge of it, uſeful to nations, never moleſts their peace.

That one of the ſtrongeſt proofs of this aſſertion is the ſlowneſs with which truth is propagated.

Of governments.

That the happineſs of the prince is not annexed in any government, as is imagined, to the miſery of the people.

That we owe the truth to mankind.

That the obligation to declare it ſuppoſes the free uſe of the means of diſcovering it.

That

That when nations are deprived of this liberty they are plunged in ignorance.

Of the evils produced by an indifference for the truth.

That the legiſlator is not, as ſome pretend, ever obliged to ſacrifice the happineſs of the preſent generation to that of future generations.

That ſuch ſuppoſition is abſurd.

That men ought to be the more excited to the ſearch of truth; as being in general indifferent about it, they judge an opinion to be true or falſe, merely as it is their intereſt to believe it to be the one or the other.

That this intereſt will make them deny, on occaſion, the truth of geometric demonſtrations.

That it makes men eſteem in themſelves the cruelty they deteſt in others.

That it makes them reſpect crimes.

That it makes ſaints.

That it proves to great men the ſuperiority of their ſpecies over that of other men.

That it makes vice to be honoured in a protector.

That the intereſt of the powerful commands more imperiouſly than the truth, in general opinions.

That a ſecret intereſt has always concealed from the parliaments the conformity of the morality of the Jeſuits with that of papiſm.

That

That intereſt makes men daily deny this maxim, "Do not to others what thou wouldſt not they ſhould do unto thee."

That it prevent the prieſt, who is an honeſt man, from ſeeing the evils produced by Catholiſm, and the projects of a ſect that is intolerant becauſe it is ambitious, and regicide becauſe it is intolerant.

Of the means employed by the church to ſubject nations.

Of the time when the Catholic church will ſuffer its pretenſions to lie dormant.

Of the time when it will revive them.

The pretenſions of the church proved by right.

The ſame pretenſions proved by facts.

Of the means of enchaining eccleſiaſtic ambition.

That toleration which can alone reſtrain it, may, by enlightening the minds of men, ſecure the tranquility and happineſs of nations, whoſe characters are ſuſceptible of all the forms that the law, the government, and eſpecially public education can give them.

SECTION X.

Of the power of education, and the means of giving it the utmoſt degree of perfection. Of the obſtacles to the progreſs of this ſcience.

Of

Of the facility with which, theſe obſtacles removed, the plan of an excellent education might be traced out.

Of education.

That it can do all.

That princes, like private perſons, are the produce of their inſtruction.

That we cannot expect great princes without a great change in their education.

Of the principal advantages of a public over a private education.

A general idea of the corporeal education of man.

Of the time and ſituation in which man is ſuſceptible of a moral education.

Of education relative to different profeſſions.

Of the moral education of man.

Of the obſtacles to the perfection of this part of education.

The intereſt of the prieſt, the firſt obſtacle.

The imperfection of moſt governments, the ſecond obſtacle.

That every important reformation in the moral part of education ſuppoſes a reformation in the laws and form of government.

That this reformation made, and the obſtacles that oppoſe the progreſs of inſtruction once removed, the problem of the beſt education poſſible will be reſolved.

What

What I propoſe in the four following chapters is to prove the analogy of my opinions with thoſe of Locke.

To ſhew all the importance and extent of the principle of corporeal ſenſibility.

To reply to the reproach of materialiſm and impiety.

To ſhew all the abſurdity of ſuch accuſations, and the impoſſibility of any intelligent moraliſts eſcaping, in this reſpect, the cenſures of the eccleſiaſtics.

CHAP. I.

Of the analogy of my principles with thoſe of Locke.

THE underſtanding is nothing more than the aſſemblage of our ideas. Our ideas, ſays Locke, come to us by the ſenſes; and from this principle, as from mine, it may be concluded that the underſtanding is nothing more in us than an acquiſition.

To regard it as a mere gift of nature, or the effect of a particular organiſation, without being able to name the organ by which it is produced, is to bring back to philoſophy the occult qualities; it is to believe without proof, and judge at a venture.

Hiſtory and experience equally inform us that the underſtanding is independent of the greater or leſs fineneſs of the ſenſes ; that men of different conſtitutions are ſuſceptible of the ſame paſſions and the ſame ideas.

The principles of Locke, far from contradicting this opinion, confirm it; they prove that education makes us what we are; that men the more reſemble each other as their inſtructions are more ſimilar; and conſequently that a German reſembles a Frenchman more than an Aſiatic; and another German more than a Frenchman ; and, in ſhort, if the underſtandings of men be very different, it is becauſe none of them have the ſame education.

Such are the facts on which I have compoſed this work ; I offer it with the more confidence to the public, as the analogy of my principles with thoſe of Locke aſſure me of their truth.

If I were deſirous of courting the protection of the theologians, I would add, that theſe principles are the moſt conformable to the ideas a Chriſtian ought to form of the juſtice of God.

In fact, if the underſtanding, the characters, and paſſions of men depend on the unequal perfection of their organs, and each individual were a different machine, how could the juſtice of heaven, or even that of earth, require the ſame effects from diſimilar machines ? Would God have given the

ſame

ſame law to all, without granting them all the ſame means of fulfilling it?

If a refined and delicate probity be that of precept, and if that kind of precept frequently ſuppoſes great intelligence, it follows, that all men commonly well organiſed, muſt be endowed by the Divinity with an equal aptitude to underſtanding.

Let it not be imagined however that I would maintain the truth of my principles by theological arguments; I do not accuſe to the fanatics, thoſe whoſe opinions on this ſubject are different from mine: to oppoſe them with other arms than thoſe of reaſon, would be to wound the enemy behind whom I dared not look in the face.

Experience and reaſon are the only judges of my principles: were their truth demonſtrated, I ſhould not conclude that theſe principles ought to be immediately and univerſally adopted. The truth is always propagated ſlowly. The Hungarians believed in vampires a long time after their non-exiſtence had been demonſtrated. The antiquity of an error renders it for a long time reſpectable. I therefore do not flatter myſelf with ſeeing the common race of men abandon, for my opinions, thoſe in which they have been educated, and which they reſpect.

How many are there who, inwardly convinced of the falſity of an opinion, ſtill maintain it, becauſe it is generally believed, and becauſe they will

not ſtruggle with a public opinion! There are few ſincere lovers of the truth, few who employ themſelves earneſtly in the ſearch after it, and who embrace it wherever they find it. For a man to dare to declare himſelf the apoſtle of the truth, he muſt centre all his happineſs in the poſſeſſion of it.

Beſide, to whom is it granted to perceive at once the truth of a new opinion? To a ſmall number of young people, who having, at their entering the world, no determined ideas, choſe the moſt rational. It is for them and poſterity the philoſopher writes. The philoſopher ſees in the perſpective of futurity the time when an opinion that is true, but ſingular and little known, ſhall become the common and general opinion. He who cannot enjoy by anticipation the eulogies of poſterity, but deſires impatiently the glory of the preſent day, ſhould refrain from the ſearch after truth: it will not offer itſelf to his inquiry.

CHAP. II.

Of the importance and extent of the principle of corporeal ſenſibility.

WHAT is a ſcience? A ſeries of propoſitions which all relate to one general and original principle. Is morality a ſcience? Yes; if in corporeal ſenſation I have diſcovered the ſole principle

principle of which all the precepts of morality are the neceſſary conſequences. It is an evident proof of the truth of this principle, that it explains all the modes of being of mankind, that it develops the cauſes of their underſtanding, their ſtupidity, their love, their hatred, their errors and contradictions. This principle ought to be the more eaſily and univerſally adopted, as the exiſtence of corporeal ſenſibility is a fact allowed by all, as the idea of it is clear, the notion diſtinct, the expreſſion determinate, and, laſtly, as no error can mix itſelf with ſo ſimple an axiom.

Corporeal ſenſibility ſeems to have been given to men as a tutelar angel, charged to watch inceſſantly over their preſervation. Let men be happy; this perhaps is the ſole view of nature, and the ſole principle of morality. When the laws are good, private intereſt will never be deſtructive of that of the public: every one will be employed in purſuing his felicity; every one will be fortunate and juſt; becauſe every one will perceive that his happineſs depends upon that of his neighbour.

In numerous ſocieties where the laws are ſtill imperfect, if the villain, the fanatic, and the tyrant forget their duty, let death * ſtrike the villain, the

* *Our author doubtleſs means that they ſhould receive the moſt condign puniſhment; but death, as I have elſewhere ſhewn, is not the moſt condign puniſhment for atrocious crimes.*

fanatic, the tyrant, and every enemy to the public welfare.

Pleaſure and pain are the bonds by which private intereſt may be always united with that of the nation: they both take their ſource from corporeal ſenſibility. The ſciences of morality and legiſlation cannot therefore be any thing elſe than deductions from this ſimple principle: I may alſo add, that is development extends even to the ſeveral rules of the arts of amenity, whoſe objects, as I have already ſaid, is to excite ſenſations in us; and the more lively they are(10), the more beautiful and ſublime the work they produce will appear.

Corporeal ſenſibility is man himſelf, and the principle of all he produces; ſo that his knowledge never extends beyond that of the ſenſes; all that is not ſubject to them is inacceſſible to his underſtanding.

The ſcholaſtics however pretend, without their aid, to pierce into the intellectual kingdoms: but theſe Siſyphi roll a ſtone that will inceſſantly fall back upon them. What is the produce of their vain declamations and eternal wranglings? what do we find in their immenſe volumes? A deluge of words extended over a deſert of ideas.

To what is the ſcience of man reducible? To two ſorts of knowledge:

The one is that of the relation objects have to him;

The

The other, that of the relation objects have to each other.

Now what are theſe two ſorts of knowledge, but two different developments of corporeal ſenſibility *?

My fellow-citizens may, after this work, ſee further and better than I do: I have ſhewn them the principle from which they may deduce the laws that are proper to eſtabliſh their happineſs: If its novelty ſurpriſe them, and they doubt its truth, let them try to ſubſtitute for it, one whoſe exiſtence ſhall be as univerſally acknowledged, of which they have as clear an idea, and from which they can draw as great a number of conſequences. If there be none ſuch, let them then regard corporeal ſenſibility as the ſole touchſtone by which, for the future, the truth or falſhood of each propoſition in morality and politics is to be proved. Every propoſition ſhould be reputed falſe that cannot be deduced from this axiom. Error is the ſole matter heterogeneous to truth. For the reſt, I am not a legiſlator, and occupy but a ſmall ſpace in this univerſe: all that I am able to do for my fellow-citizens is to preſent them in this work with the ſole principle of their knowledge. I have

* If men regard the principle of corporeal ſenſibility as deſtructive of the doctrine taught concerning the ſoul, they deceive themſelves. If I be ſenſible, it is becauſe I have a ſoul, a principle of life and ſenſation, to which you may always give what name you will.

doubtleſs advanced nothing in this book contrary to true religion; but I have maintained the neceſſity of toleration; I have ſhewn the dangers to which the too great power of the prieſthood equally expoſes both prince and people; I have pointed out the barrier that may be oppoſed to its ambition: I am therefore in their ſight impious; but ſhall I appear ſo in the eyes of the public?

CHAP. III.

Of the accuſations of materialiſm and impiety, and of their abſurdity.

THE hatred of the theologians may be dreaded at Paris and Liſbon; but there are countries where that hatred is impotent; where the reproach of impiety is no longer regarded; where every accuſation of that kind is become ridiculous, and conſidered as a vague expreſſion of monachal fury and ſtupidity.

Of what impiety moreover can they accuſe me? I have in no part of this work denied the Trinity, the divinity of Jeſus, the immortality of the ſoul, the reſurrection of the dead, nor even any one article of the papiſts creed: I have not therefore in any ſort attacked religion.

But the Jeſuits have accuſed the Janſeniſts of materialiſm; they may therefore accuſe me of it: be

be it ſo; I ſhall content myſelf with anſwering them, that they have no complete ideas of matter; that they know nothing but body; that the word *materialiſt* is as obſcure to them as to me; that we are in this reſpect equally ignorant, but that they are more fanatic.

Every conſiſtent book is regarded with horror by the theologians.

" La raiſon a leurs yeux n'eſt jamais Catho-
" lique."

Reaſon is never Catholic in their eyes.

The hereditary enemies of every rational work, perhaps they will anathematiſe this; yet have I ſaid no evil of them that was not abſolutely indiſpenſable. I could have wrote after St. Jerome, that the church is the whore of Babylon: I have not done it. Where I take part againſt the prieſts, it is in favour of nations and of ſovereigns. Where I plead the cauſe of toleration, it is to prevent their committing new crimes.

But, they will ſay, if toleration be eſtabliſhed, if the church model its conduct after that of Jeſus, under what pretence can it impriſon and burn citizens, aſſaſſinate princes, &c. the church, then leſs dreaded, will be leſs reſpected. Now what ſignifies the example of Jeſus, what the church deſires it to be powerful. A proof of this,

Is the approbation it has given to the morality of the Jeſuits;

The

The title of Vice-God granted to its head;

And, laſtly, the belief of its infallibility, which is become an article of faith in Italy, maugre the expreſs declaration of ſcripture, *that every man is a liar.*

Would the prieſt, without the motive of ambition, have affirmed that the pope holds a middle rank between God and man? *Nec Deus, nec homo, quia neuter eſt, ſed inter utrumque.* Without a ſimilar motive, would the pope have ſuffered himſelf to be treated as demi-god? Would he have permitted Stephen Patracenus to write, that in the pope reſided all power over all the powers of heaven and earth: *In papa eſt omnis poteſtas, ſupra omnes poteſtates tam cœli quam terræ.* Would Boniface VIII. in an aſſembly held at Rome on occaſion of the jubilee, have ſaid, I am pope and emperor, I have power over heaven and earth: *Ego ſum pontifex & imperator, terreſtre ac celeſte imperium habeo.* Would the pope have approved the phraſe in the canon law, where he is called the Lord our God? *Dominus Deus noſter.* Would Nicholas have boaſted of having been called God by Conſtantine? canon *Satis evidenter.* Diſt. 96. Would the theologians have declared, in other canons, "That the pope is as much above the "emperor, as pure gold is above baſe lead; that "the emperors receive their authority from the "pope, as the moon receives its light from the "ſun;

" ſun; that the emperors conſequently will never " be any thing elſe than moons *."

To conclude, would the prieſts, to juſtify their intolerance, have made of the Divinity an unjuſt, revengeful, and wrathful tyrant? would they have heaped on God all the vices of men †?

If every mean of acquiring power appear lawful to the prieſthood, every obſtacle ſet to the increaſe of that power muſt appear an impiety; I therefore am impious in their eyes. Now ſuch is, in certain countries, the power of the prieſt over the prince, that the former can at his pleaſure irritate the latter againſt thoſe very authors who defend the rights of his crown: how many devout ſouls moreover can they excite to worry a writer!

* One of of the canonical doctors, ſtill more hardy, ſaid, *Papa eſt ſupra me, extra me, papa eſt omnis & ſupra omnia; papa is dominus dominantium, papa poteſt mutare quadrata rotundis:* that is, the pope is within me, and without me; the pope is all, and above all; he is the lord of lords, and of a ſquare he can make a circle What propoſition can be more impious, if by the confeſſion of the theologians, the Divinity cannot make a ſtick without two ends.

† Few nations, ſay travellers, honour the devil under his true name; but many honour him under that of God. When a people adore a Being whoſe laws are incomprehenſible, a Being that requires the belief of what is incredible, commands what is impracticable, puniſhes a weakneſs with eternal torments, and damns men for not doing what is impoſſible they ſhould do; it is evident that ſuch people, under the name of God, worſhip the devil. See a treatiſe on *Falſe Religion*, from which I have taken this paſſage.

I have

I have read the ſtory of the roſe-coloured geeſe in Crebillon; and in the world I have always ſeen that amiable and devout troop guided by ſtupid, filthy, and iniquitous monks. The geeſe always think as he does; they ſee impiety wherever he points it out to them.

This moreover is not the only reproach they will make me; the ſlave and the courtier will accuſe me of having ſpoke evil of arbitrary power: I have certainly painted it in its true colours; but it was from a love to the people, and to princes themſelves. Every ſovereign, as hiſtory proves, is either dependent on an army, if he bear the ſcepter of arbitrary power*, or dependent on the law, if he command as a limited monarch. Now of theſe two dependencies, which is moſt deſirable for the prince? in which is his perſon the leaſt expoſed? The latter.

*We may diſtinguiſh two ſorts of deſpotiſm; the one of power, the other of practice: this new diſtinction is fruitful in conſequences. A prince is a deſpot in power, when by the number of his troops, and the ſervility of the minds of the people, he has acquired the power neceſſary to diſpoſe of the property, the life, and liberty of his ſubjects at his pleaſure.

As long a prince does not uſe this power, as long as the people do not ſuffer, they think the government good, and remain unconcerned.

But if after having acquired the power to hurt, the prince put it in practice, and deprive the people of their properties, they are then irritated, they would throw off the yoke that galls them; but it is too late: it is at the birth of that unlimited power the evils they feel ſhould have been ſtifled.

The

The laws govern a free people.

Delations, force, and atrocity govern a people of ſlaves; and among them internal intrigues and the caprice of the army frequently decide the life of the monarch.

I ſhall not extend this ſubject any further.

In political ſubjects, a word is ſufficient to inform mankind: it is not ſo in religious matters; the light of reaſon rarely enters the dwellings of the devout *. They may hereafter, when better inſtructed, at laſt acknowledge that there is no work exempt from the accuſation of impiety.

* Aboulola, the moſt famous of the Arabic poets, had no opinion of the diſcernment of the devouts. The following is a tranſlation of ſome of his ſtanzas.

Iſſa is come; he has aboliſhed the law of Mouſſai.

Mahomet has followed him; he introduced prayers five times each day.

His followers pretend that no other prophet will come.

They employ themſelves in uſeleſs prayers from morning to night.

Tell me now, ſince you have lived under one of theſe laws, have you enjoyed more ſun and moon?

If you anſwer me impertinently, I ſhall lift up my voice againſt you; but if you ſpeak ſincerely, I ſhall continue to ſpeak quite gently.

The Chriſtians in their purſuits wander here and there, and the Muſſulmans are quite out their way.

The Jews are nothing more than mummies; and the magi of Perſia are mere dreamers.

The world is divided into two claſſes of men.

The one have underſtanding, but no religion.

The other have religion, but no underſtanding.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the impoſſibility for any intelligent moraliſt to eſcape eccleſiaſtic cenſures.

WHEN a man defends the rights of the people, he injures the intereſt of the church, which ſeeks a pretence to accuſe him, and ſuch pretence it always finds.

The ſcriptures are the book of God, and their divers interpretations form the different ſects of Chriſtians: it is therefore on the ſcriptures that hereſies are founded.

Jeſus favoured that of the Arians, when he ſaid, "My father is greater than I." Jeſus changed all our ideas of the Divinity, when he ſeemed to regard him as the author of evil, and ſaid in his prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." Now if in the Lord's prayer itſelf we meet with ſo extraordinary a propoſition, in what human work may not monachal hatred and malice find out hereſy? If we write in favour of humanity, the ſacerdotal intereſt becomes offended, and then we may cry out with the prophet, "Deliver my "work from iniquitous lips, and from a deceitful "tongue *." If therefore they ſhould draw from

* How many theological libels have been publiſhed againſt the Treatiſe on the Mind! What was the author's crime? The diſcovering the ſecret of the church, which conſiſts in debaſing mankind, in order to draw from them the moſt money and moſt reſpect poſſible. Some honeſt prieſts defended that work, but their number was too ſmall; they had not a majority of voices among

this work ſome ill-ſeeming conſequences, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed. What God has not done in the ſcriptures, I have certainly not done in this book; I have not that abſurd and blaſphemous pride. What propoſition is there in geometry itſelf from which, on occaſion, ſome abſurd and even impious conſequence may not be deduced?

A mathematical point, for example, has not according to geometers, either length, breadth, or depth: now if a line be compoſed of a certain number of points; a ſurface of a certain number of lines; a cube of a certain number of ſurfaces; and if a point has no parts, there cannot exiſt either lines, ſurfaces or cubes, no bodies, no ſenſible objects; there can be no palaces that contain libraries, or any books that contain ſcriptures and revelations.

If ſuch be the immediate conſequence of the definition of a mathematical point, what book can be ſecure from the reproach of impiety? The ſyſtem of grace itſelf is not exempt. The theologians then maintain, at the ſame time, that inequality of being juſt, God grants a ſufficient grace to all, and yet that this ſufficient grace will not ſuffice. What an abſurd and impious contradiction!

In matters of religion, conſequences ought never to be inferred from principle. A man is

among the clergy: it was, above all, the archbiſhop of Paris who urged the Sorbonne to riſe againſt the book on the Mind, which they did not underſtand: it was the prophet Balaam, who, mounted on his aſs, preſſed forward without perceiving the ſpirit or angel that oppoſed him.

not

not an infidel, when he does not formally and positively deny ſome article of faith.

If the monks and the prieſts will deign, like true chriſtians, to interpret charitably, ſuch paſſages as may chance to ſlip into a philoſophic work, they will find nothing that is not orthodox.

In this work I have pleaded the cauſe of toleration, and conſequently of humanity: but is a man an atheiſt becauſe he is humane?

If I would have paid leſs regard to reaſon perhaps, by example of the Janſeniſts, I ſhould have ſubmitted this work to the deciſion of the firſt council, and have begged the readers to have ſeen with their eyes, and have judged by their reaſon. Of this I can aſſure the reader, that in compoſing this book, my object has been to ſecure the happineſs of nations, and the lives of ſovereigns. If I have wounded eccleſiaſtic pride, it was becauſe, like Lucian, "I better liked to "diſpleaſe in ſpeaking the truth, than to pleaſe "by relating fables."

Though ſome errors ſhould be diſcovered in this work, I ſhall always bear myſelf this teſtimony, that I have not at leaſt intentionally erred, but have ſaid what I thought true and uſeful to individuals and to nations. Who then can be my enemy? and who will riſe up againſt me? They alone who hate the truth, and wiſh ill to their country. For the reſt, if the papiſt calumniate me, I ſhall cry with the prophet, "Let "them curſe me, but do thou Lord bleſs me."

What

What I have in particular to inform the clergy of France is, that their immoderate and ridiculous fury againſt letters, renders them ſuſpected and odious to Europe. A man makes a book, that book is full of truths or errors. In the firſt caſe, why, under the name of the author, perſecute the truth itſelf? In the other caſe, why puniſh in a writer, errors that are evidently involuntary? Whoever does not write for hire, or to pleaſe a party, can propoſe to himſelf nothing but glory as the reward of his labours. Now glory is always attached to the truth: if by ſearching after it I fall into an error, the oblivion in which my name and my work will be plunged will be my puniſhment, and the only puniſhment I ſhall deſerve. If men would have death to be the puniſhment of a dubious or falſe judgment, what writer would be ſecure of his life? and who ſhall throw the firſt ſtone? What do the prieſts propoſe by requiring the puniſhment of an author? If they purſue an error with fire and ſword, they give it credit. If they purſue a truth with the ſame rancour, they render its propagation more rapid. What has the conduct of the papiſtical clergy hitherto proved? Merely that they have been, and always will be, perſecuters of the truth. More moderation would doubtleſs become them better. Moderation is at all times decent; but it is even neceſſary in an age when cruelty irritates the minds of men, but does not ſubject them.

Virtus non territa monſtris.

NOTES.

1. (Page 400.) TO what may the ſcience of education be reduced? To the means of compelling mankind to acquire thoſe virtues and talents we require in them. Is there any thing impoſſible to education? No.

Does a child of the village fear ſpectres, and you would diſpel that fear in him? Leave him in a wood, with the paths of which he is acquainted; follow him without his perceiving it, and let him return to the houſe alone. After three or four walks he will ſee no more ſpectres in the wood; he will have acquired by habit and neceſſity all the courage with which they inſpire young peaſants.

2. (ibid.) If parents ſhould intereſt themſelves with all that attention they pretend, in the education of their children, they would certainly take more care of them. Whom would they chuſe for nurſes? Women, who being previouſly diveſted, by intelligent perſons, of their ridiculous tales and maxims, would be qualified to correct the faults of the moſt tender infancy. Parents would take care that their ſons, after being attended, till ſix years old, by women, ſhould then enter the houſes of public inſtruction, where, far from the diſſipations of the world, they ſhould remain till ſeventeen or eighteen years old; that is, till the time they enter the world, and there receive the education of men: an education doubtleſs the moſt important, but entirely dependent on the ſocieties they frequent, the ſituations in which they are placed, and the form of government under which they live.

3. (p. 404.) If violent exerciſes fortify not only the body, but alſo the temperament, it is perhaps becauſe they retard in man the premature gratification of certain pleaſures.

It is not the reproaches of a mother, nor the ſermons of a curate, but fatigue alone that can damp the fierce deſires of youth.

The

The more a young man perſpires, the more animal ſpirits he exhauſts; in the exerciſes of the body and the mind, the leſs his imagination will be heated, the leſs inclination he will have to love.

Perhaps the exceſſive love of women in Aſia, is the effect of the idleneſs of body and mind with thoſe people. It is certain, that in Canada, the ſavage, daily exhauſted by hunting and fiſhing is in general little ſenſible to pleaſure. The tardy love of women among the ancient Germans was doubtleſs the effect of the ſame cauſe. M. Rouſſeau, p. 144. vol. iii. of Emilius, highly extols the continence of that people, and regards it as the cauſe of their valour. I make, as well as M. Rouſſeau, great account of continence; but I do not agree with him that it is the mother of courage.

Fable and hiſtory inform us that Hercules, Theſeus, Achilles, Alexander, Mahomet, Henry IV. marſhal Saxe, &c. were brave, but not chaſte. Among the monks there are ſome who are very chaſte, but few that are brave.

When ſpeaking of the love of women and the Socratic love, the wiſe Plutarch examines which of them moſt excites men to great actions, and mentions on the ſubject the ancient heroes; he is clearly of a different opinion from M. Rouſſeau. We may then conclude, after Plutarch and hiſtory, that courage is not the neceſſary conſequence of chaſtity.

To conclude, I do not preſerve leſs reſpect for this virtue than that which many people alſo have for a chaſtity of ideas very different. Nothing is more impudent in the eyes of a Mahometan woman than to ſee a German, Italian, or French woman going to her devotion with a bare face.

4. (p. 415.) There have been, they ſay, people who have had their property in common; and there are ſome who highly extol this community of property: there are no happy people, they ſay, but thoſe without property. They cite for example the Scythians, the Tartars, and Spartans.

With regard to the Scythians and Tartars, they always preſerved the property of their cattle, and in that property conſiſted all their wealth. As to the Spartans, we know they had ſlaves, and that each of them poſſeſſed one of the 39000 portions of land that compoſed the territory of Lacedæmon or Laconia: the Spartans therefore had property.

However virtuous they may have been, hiſtory informs us that, like other men, the Lacedæmonians would reap without ſowing, and that they conſequently obliged the Helotes to cultivate theſe grounds. Thoſe Helotes were the negroes of the republic: they fertiliſed the earth. From hence the want of ſlaves, and perhaps the neceſſity of war.

We therefore ſee, even by the Lacedæmonian form of government, that the free part of the inhabitants could not be happy but at the expence of the others; and that the pretended community of property among the Spartans, could not, whatever ſome pretend, operate the miracle of a univerſal felicity.

Under the government of the Jeſuits, the inhabitants of Paraguay cultivated the land in common, and with their own hands. Were they the more happy? I doubt it; and the indifference with which they received the account of the deſtruction juſtifies this doubt. Theſe people, without property, were without energy, and without emulation. But could not the hope of glory and importance animate their minds? No: glory and importance are among the means of acquiring real pleaſures. Now what pleaſure, in thoſe countries, could one enjoy more than another?

When we conſider the kind, and the ſmall number of ſocieties in which the community of property has been practiſed, we muſt always ſuppoſe that ſome ſecret obſtacles obſtruct the formation as well as the happineſs of ſuch ſocieties. To form a juſt judgment on this queſtion, we ſhould examine, with the utmoſt attention, if the exiſtence of ſuch a ſociety be equally poſſible in every ſituation, and for that effect conſider it,

1. In an iſland.

2. In a country divided by vaſt deſarts, and ſurrounded by immenſe foreſts, whoſe conqueſts for that reaſon would be equally difficult and undeſireable.

3. In a country where the inhabitants, wandering like the Tartars with their herds, can always eſcape the purſuit of an enemy.

4. In a country covered with cities, and ſurrounded by powerful nations; and ſee, in the laſt place, if in this ſituation (doubtleſs the moſt common) this ſociety can preſerve that degree of emulation, underſtanding, and courage, neceſſary to reſiſt a people who are proprietors, learned and intelligent.

I ſhall

I ſhall not farther inveſtigate a queſtion whoſe truth or falſity the leſs affects my ſubject; as wherever the community of goods is not eſtabliſhed, property ought to be ſacred.

5. (p. 420.) The right of teſtation, is it uſeful or detrimental to ſociety? This is a problem not yet reſolved. This right, ſay ſome, is a right of property of which a citizen cannot be legally deprived. Every man, ſay others, has, during his life, the right of diſpoſing of his property at his pleaſure; but at his death he ceaſes to be a proprietor. The dead have nothing. The right of transferring his property to this or that perſon may have been conferred on him by law. Now ſuppoſing this right to occaſion an infinity of litigations, and that all things conſidered, it was found more detrimental than uſeful to ſociety, who can deny that ſociety the right of changing a law it finds miſchievous.

6. (ibid.) *The will of man is vagrant*, ſay the laws, and yet thoſe laws ordain the indiſſolubility of marriage. What contradiction! and what follows from it? The miſery of a great number of married people. Now miſery begets hatred between them, and hatred frequently the moſt atrocious crimes. But what gave occaſion to the indiſſolubility of marriage? The profeſſion of the huſbandman, which was exerciſed by the firſt of mankind.

In this ſtate, the daily and reciprocal aſſiſtance the married parties required of each other, lightened the yoke of marriage. While the huſband tilled the field, the wife fed the poultry, led the cattle to water, ſheered the ſheep, prepared the dinner for her huſband, children, and domeſtics; the man and wife thus occupied with the ſame object, that is, the improvement of their land, were ſeldom together, and conſequently free from a diſguſt of each other: it therefore is not wonderful that the huſband and wife being always in action, and always neceſſary to each other, ſhould ſometimes be even fond of their indiſſoluble contract.

If it be not the ſame with the prieſt, the ſoldier, and the magiſtrate, it is becauſe in theſe profeſſions the huſband and wife are leſs neceſſary to each other. In fact, of what uſe can a wife be to a huſband in the functions of a mufti, a viſir, a cadi, &c.? A wife with them is nothing more than an article of luxury and pleaſure. Such are the cauſes that among different nations have modified the union of the two ſexes in an infinity

of

of different manners. There are countries where men have many wives and many concubines; in other countries they do not marry till after three or four years of trial; and there are other countries where women are in common, or where the union of man and wife does not laſt longer than they love each other; now let us ſuppoſe that in the eſtabliſhment of a new form of marriage, the legiſlature, freed from the tyranny of prejudices and cuſtom, ſhould propoſe for its ſole object the public good, and the greateſt happineſs of the man and wife; and not content with promoting divorces, ſhould ſearch out the means of rendering the conjugal union the moſt delicious poſſible; theſe means found, the form of marriage would become invariable; for no one can have a right to ſubſtitute leſs beneficial for more beneficial laws, to diminiſh the ſum of the national happineſs, nor even to oppoſe the complaints of individuals, when their pleaſures are not incompatible with the happineſs of the majority. But whence comes it that this important problem has not yet been reſolved? Becauſe nations being obſtinately attached to their cuſtoms, will not change them but when forced to it by abſolute neceſſity. Now, however bad the preſent form of marriage may be, yet ſocieties ſubſiſt, though they ſubſiſt leſs happily, and the idleneſs of legiſlatures reſts contented.

7. (p. 423.) The want of the ſocial virtues may be perceived even by childhood itſelf. Would we deeply engrave in the memory of a child the principles of juſtice; let a tribunal be erected for that purpoſe in every college, where the children themſelves may judge the differences that ariſe between them; let the ſentences of this little tribunal be carried by appeal before the maſter, and by him be corrected or confirmed, according as they are juſt or unjuſt. Let men be employed to offer ſuch injuries or offences to the pupils as will be difficult to prove, and will oblige the plaintiff to reflect on his cauſe in order to ſupport it, and the tribunal of children to reflect in order to judge it properly.

The pupils by this method being obliged to reflect perpetually on the precepts of juſtice, will ſoon acquire clear ideas of it. It was by a method nearly ſimilar to this that M. Rouſſeau gave to his Emilius the firſt notions of property. Nothing can be more ingenious than this method, and yet it is neglected. Had M. Rouſſeau made this diſcovery only, I ſhould have numbered

numbered him among the benefactors of humanity, and have willingly erected to him the ſtatue he demands.

Sufficient attention is not paid to the forming the judgment of children. When we have charged their memory with an infinity of little facts, we are ſatisfied. What follows? The child is a prodigy of loquacity, and the man a prodigy of nonſenſe.

To form the judgment of a pupil, what ſhould be done? Make him firſt reaſon on what concerns him perſonally. As his underſtanding extends, he ſhould be made to apply it to more important objects. For this purpoſe, the plan of the laws and cuſtoms of different people ſhould be laid before him; he ſhould be made to judge of the ſagacity and the folly of thoſe cuſtoms and laws, and at laſt made to weigh their perfection or imperfection by the balance of the greateſt happineſs and greateſt intereſt of a republic. It is by meditating on the principle of national utility that a child acquires juſt and general ideas of morality; his mind moreover being exerciſed by theſe grand objects, becomes more adapted to every ſort of ſtudy.

The more eaſy application becomes, the more force the mind acquires. A child cannot be too early accuſtomed to the fatigue of attention; and to make him contract the habit of it, we ſhould, whatever M. Rouſſeau may ſay, ſometimes have reſource to fear. It is by juſt and ſevere maſters that the beſt ſcholars are in general formed. The child, like the man, is moved only by the hope of pleaſure and the fear of pain. If the child be yet inſenſible to pleaſure, nor ſuſceptible of the love of glory, and without emulation; it is the fear of puniſhment alone that can fix his attention. Fear is, in public education, a reſource to which maſters are indiſpenſibly obliged to recur, but which they ought to manage with prudence.

8. (p. 439.) Under every government where I cannot be happy but by the miſery of others, I ſhall be wretched. There is no remedy for this evil but by a reformation in the government. But what means are there to make the people conſent to this reformation, and acknowledge the iniquity of their laws? How can you make the blind ſee? Men may indeed be inſtructed by books; but the greateſt part of them do not read: they may alſo be informed by preachments; but people in power forbid preaching againſt vices they imagine to be advantageous to themſelves. The difficulty of inſtructing the people in their real

real intereſt from their oppoſition to every wiſe reformation in governments, muſt therefore eterniſe their errors.

9. (p. 439.) If the ſtudy of the Latin language were as greatly uſeful as perhaps it is little, and we would, in the leaſt time poſſible, engrave all its words in the mind of a child, what ſhould be done? Place them among people who ſpeak nothing but Latin. If a mariner, caſt by a tempeſt on an iſland, of whoſe language he is ignorant, learns to ſpeak it ſoon, it is becauſe he has for maſters want and neceſſity. Now if a child be placed as nearly as may be in the ſame circumſtances, he will learn more Latin in two years, than he will learn at college in ten.

10. (p. 470.) Why in poetry does the beautiful in ſentiment and images ſtrike more generally than the beautiful in ideas? Becauſe men have ſenſibility before they have diſcernment; that is, they receive ſenſations before they compare them with each other.

FINIS.